AN APOLOGY FOR, OR VINDICATION OF THE

Oppreſſed perſecuted Miniſters & Profeſſors of the Presbyterian Reformed Religion, in the Church of *Scotland*; emitted in the defence of them, and the cauſe for which they ſuffer; & that for the information of ignorant, the ſatisfaction and eſtabliſhment of the doubtful, the conviction (if poſſible) of the malicious, the warning of our Rulers, the ſtrengthening & comforting of the ſaid ſufferers under their preſent preſſurs & trials.

Being their Teſtimony to the Covenanted work of Reformation in this Church, and againſt the preſent prevailing corruptions and courſe of defection therefrom.

PROV. XXIII. Verſ. 23.

Buy the truth & ſell it not; alſo wiſdom, inſtruction, & underſtanding.

I. PET. III. Verſ. 15.

But ſanctify the Lord God in your hearts; & be ready always to give an anſwer to every man, that asketh you, a reaſon of the hope, that is in you, with meekneſs & fear.

JUD. Verſ. 3.

It was needful for me, to write unto you, & to exhort you, that ye ſhould earneſtly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the ſaints.

Preſtat ſero, quàm numquam ſapere.

Printed in the Year 1677.

To the most Noble and Honourable

LORDS,

The Lords temporal of his Majesties Secret Council, in the Kingdom of *Scotland*.

Most noble and honourable Lords.

CAsting our eyes about us to see, under the wings of whose patrociny & protection, we should shelter the ensuing *Apology* or *vindication*; we could not, in our apprehensions, fix upon any so fited for this, as your *Lo.* who, by the station, & office you bear under his *Maj.* in this Kingdom, are constitute the protectors of the poor, the Releevers of the oppressed, & the breakers of every unjust yoke: the serious thoughts of which does afford us this confidence, that as our unjust oppressions make us objects, fitted for your *Lo.* compassion and justice; so your *Lo.* office, and what it binds unto, in the behalf of the oppressed, before God and men, will

on the ingenuous & plaine production of our reasons, for the justice of our cause, at length prevail, for breaking of these yokes of oppression now on us; and removing of their real causes. We therefore cannot but in charity and reason expect, that much humanity & justice, from your *Lo.* that was granted by heathen Rulers, to Ministers & Christians, in the primitive times of the Christian Church; of which we have in Scripture & History memorable instances. Was not *Paul Act.* 26:1. permited by King *Agrippa* to speak for himself, who, in vindication of his righteous cause, deduced the grounds thereof and cleared them so to the conviction of his hearers, that they judged him neither worthy of death, nor of bonds. Did not some of the Roman Emperours upon the reading of the Apologie of the Christians, as of *Justin Martyr Apollinaris, Mileto, Origen, Tertullian* and others, declare their innocency and mitigat the rage of persecution, th[e]n then prevailed against them? May n[o]

we then, who professe the same Protestant Religion with your *Lo* entertaine ourselves with the hope of the same favour & justice, that was shewed by Rulers, to the Lords people before us?

As our adversaries calumnies & bitter reproaches, with which they labour to render us odious to all, especially, to your *Lo.* are unjust and malitious; (being partly their evil and uncharitable deductions from our principles and actions, and partly grosse & notorious lies; such as the heathens charged on the primitive Christians, who finding no just mater for their accusations from their Profession and behaviour, gave it out to the world, that they worshiped the Sun, an asses head, and used promiscuous copulation at their assemblies;) So it is the Testimony of our consciences, that as a brazen wal does sheild & uphold our Spirits from sinking, under those burdens, with which they have aimed to keep us at under with your *Lo.* We know, there is no new or stran-

ge thing happened unto us, but what hath been the common lot of eminent ſaints, yea of Chriſt Jeſus, our bleſſed Lord and Maſter; the ſervant is not greater then the Maſter; if they dealt ſo with him, no mervail they deal ſo with us. So great is the Teſtimony & witneſs of our conſciences, as to all the greivous things, they have and do charge upon us, that we have hitherto poſſeſſed our ſouls in patience, and not opened our juſt and true greivances (as we might and should have done) for fear of offending your *Lo.* But perceiving the truth of the Goſpel, the righteouſneſs of our cauſe, and the welfair of immortal ſouls, are like to ſuffer thorow our too long ſilence, we have adventured to diſcloſe our thoughts, and to give, ſo far as we can, a ſatisfieing account of the grounds of that faith and hope, for which we ſuffer. The God of Gods knowes, & Iſrael shall know, we uſe this fredom and plainneſs of ſpeech towards your *Lo.* and all others, not from any contentious and ill affect-

ed humour; but from the ſenſe of the obligations laying on us, for the conſervation of the true intereſt of Religion, and the hope of relief for theſe from your *Lo.* which we moſt humbly beg and exſpect, for the ſake of truth and righteouſneſs, that are now fallen in the ſtreets, and fled into Corners. If on an impartial examination of what we have ſaid, in the defence of our cauſe, and of ourſelves for its ſake, againſt the reproachs of our enemies, it ſhall be found that it is not juſt, but iniquous, we ask no benefite from your *Lo.* clemency and juſtice; let all ſeverity be uſed. But if the cauſe of our former and preſent ſufferings be righteous (in the confidence of which, we have been bold to give to your *Lo.* and the Chriſtian world this ſober enſueing account) we humbly entreat that protection and relief in its defence, which your power and ſtation in this Kingdome do enable and oblige your *Lo.* to.

Wherefore caſting ourſelves at your *Lo.* feet. We doe, in the behalfe of

pure Religion & undefiled & the ſouls of all concerned therein, beſeech your *Lo.* *First.* That our juſt & well grounded exceptions againſt *Prelacy* & *Eraſtianiſme*, may be taken into conſideration & laid to heart: for if they hold good, will not the future conſequences of theſe evils, to this land, your *Lo.* families, & poſterity, be dreadful, who thereby are laid pento the judgments, denunced in the the Word of God, againſt perjury and Covenant breaking? We doe not lay the ſtreſſe of our cauſe on the Covenants & Oaths, taken by this nation, againſt the foreſaid evils or corruptions, as the primary and chief Argument (as will appear to all on the peruſal of our ſubſequent *Apology*;) but on their oppoſition to the Word of the holy and true God: for, we grant, Covenants and Oathes, that are obligatory and binde to an obſervance, ſuppone their matter to be antecedently juſt, and do bring their primary obligation from it; hence the things contained in, & engaged to by Covenants and Oaths,

must be proven and made out to be neceſſare & righteous from the Word of God, before their obligation can be admitted & received; which we have laboured to doe, in this following diſcourſe. And if from it, our Covenants and Oaths doe appear to be juſt, are we not aſſured, that the corruptions and ſins engaged againſt by ſuch divine tyes, and relapſed into contrare to theſe engadgments, doe provoke our Holy and righteous God, to the inflicting of all thoſe plagues and judgments, threatened in the word againſt the violators of ſuch ſacred bonds? And if this be a truth; (as we hope none will deny) what can we then expect to our ſelves & poſterity, if reformation & repentance doe not prevent, but ruine and deſolation, according to every ones acceſſion to theſe evils; which, no doubt, are crying for vengeance on this declining Church? *Next*, We pray your *Lo.* to conſider, that we build our concluſions on no other foundation, then our worthy reformers in this

Church and others, laid downe in their arguments and debates against *popery*; which for its want of, and oppoſition to the holy Scriptures, they have condemned for an Antichriſtian defection from the doctrines of Chriſt. We hold to the ſufficiency and perfection of the holy Scriptures, reſolving, thorow the Grace of God, to admit of no other rule of faith and obedience, in the maters of our God, but theſe: what they condemne, we muſt renunce; & whatſoever doctrins or practiſes, in the houſe of our God, want their authority and approbation, we cannot, yea dar not admit? The experience of the Church in preceding ages ſhews, what miſcheifs, the opening of this door, hath brought in upon her, to the almoſt uter ruine of all her concerns.

The preſent grouth of *popery*, and the quick advance it makes among all degrees of Profeſſors, in this and our nighbouring Churches, ſayes to all, &, we ſuppoſe, to your *Lo.* that the faſety & preſervation of the proteſtant re-

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formed Religion, does, in all prudence, require, that its real and sincere friends should be encouraged, and not thus persecuted with violence; which no doubt, tends so to the weakening of the Protestant interest & cause, that in one of *Queen Elizabeths Parliaments*, it was judged a sufficient reason, not only to restraine the rigide pressing of conformity, but likewise to encourage all Non-conformists, who, in those times, were looked upon as stout antagonists to popery, and such as might be employed, entrusted and made use of in opposition to it. Is it not to be feared, that the *Pope*, having his instruments and emissaries amongst us, for working out of his designes on these Churches, which, all his former engines have not hitherto effected; and finding, through our confusions and distempers, the occasion fitted for his purpose, hath no question, a secret active hand, in influencing and increasing of this violence; which, if the Lord, in his mercy to this many wayes af-

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flicted and ruined Church, doe not prevent; will facilitat his longed for, & much endeavoured designes against the reformed Religion in these Ilands. And however we are represented to your *Lo.* as unfriends to Religion, and the interests of State (as if they must ruine if we stand) yet the experience of past and present times, beside our publick confessions, doth sufficiently witnesse, how malitious our adversaries are in this unjust calumny? We are no innovators, nor pleaders for innovation in Church or State; but do hold, adhere to, and resolve, through the grace of God, to maintaine the reformed Protestant Religion, against all sorts of enemies, as it is contained in the holy Scriptures, summed up, and breifly comprehended in the Confessions of faith of the reformed Churchs; especially in the Confession of faith, Larger & shorter Catachismes of this Church, in opposition to all *Popish*, *Arminian*, *Socinian*, and *Sectarian* errors and innovations. We hold for our maine & root-

ed principle, the holy Scriptures to be the Word of God, the absolute perfect and only rule of faith and maners; not needing any supplement of Ecclesiastical tradition; yet we do not deny Antiquity its due respect, use & reverence: and although we maintaine, that every Christian, of what rank & degree soever, ought to study, & be conversant in the Scriptures; yet we acknowledge the necessity and great use of a Gospel standing Ministry, and receive the directive authority of the Church, not with an implicit faith, but with the judgment of discretion. We hold the teaching of the Spirit necessare to the saving knowledge of Christ; but absolutly deny, that the Spirit bringeth new revelations in maters of doctrines, worship & Government; but only that he opens the eyes, and enlightens the understanding, that we may perceive and rightly take up, what is of old revealed in the word by the same Spirit. We rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh,

or in a legal righteousnes; desireing to be found in him, who of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousnes, sanctification and redemption; yet we constantly affirme, good works of piety towards God, of equity and charity towards men, to be necessare, both *necessitate precepti & medii*: our Ministers presse on themselves & hearers, the necessity of Regeneration, as the solid fundation of good works; & the severe, strict exercise not of a popish out side formal, but of a spiritual, real mortification and self denial. We extol all ordinances of divine appointment; but reject all humane inventions, especially religious and significant not institute ceremonies in the worship of God.

It ought to have no little weight with your *Lo.* that by using of such violence, the most sober, judicious, universally religious and industrious part of the subjects, and consequently the most useful and stedfast to his Maj. true interest and honour, are exposed to dayly vexation and trouble, to the great dam-

mage and prejudice of this Nation and Kingdom. We ſuppoſe that, upon an impartial view, it will be found, that the choice and better part of the ſubjects is diſſatisfied with the Government, now introduced into this Church, and conſequently obnoxious to the ſeverity of the lawes, enacted againſt non-conformiſts: and of what dangerous conſequence this may prove to Church and State, we leave to your *Lo.* moſt ſerious conſideration. We know, the certaine iſſue of all maters, is known to God only; but if we ſhall take our meaſures, in conjecturing at future events, from the working of preſent cauſes, there is all rational ground to fear, that there are diſmal and heavy times coming on this nation, which, by taking and fallowing of right wayes, in the preſent juncture of affaires, your *Lo.* may prevent; and if not done, will, no doubt, afford mater of bitter ſorrow, & repentance to your *Lo.* or children afterwards. It is & ſhall be our hearty prayer to God, that your *Lo.* may have the Spi-

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rit of wisdome, and of the fear of the Lord, poured out upon you, to foresee the evils, that are hastening towards us, and in time to hide yourselves, this Church & Kingdom from them.

Is it not apparent to all, that conscience does not act, nor lead our antagonists? Do not their opinions about Prelacy; their Profession of all readiness to comply with the contrare, if on foot; their frequent changes into the interests and formes of all preceeding times, how contrare soever to their once professed and sworn principles (while true Presbyterians remained constant and immoveable, thorow the times that went over their heads;) their covetous and licentious lives, discover their want of conscience in the courses, they now so furiously run? Let not your *Lo* think, that it is his *Maj.* interests, (as they pretend) or any true conscriencious regaird to these, that moves them to such obsequious compliance with the present lawes? Let the outward interests of this world be separated

rated from their way; and it shall soon appear, how void they are of true zeal for his Maj. and his lawes, as is evident beyond all denial, from their carriage & behaviour, in past & present times. As we have no external benefite to expect to engage us against conformity to the present lawes about Church Government; so we are to look, from our principles, and practises conforme thereto, no lesse then the ruine of our selves & families in this world: if conscience of duety towards God & this Church, according to the word, did not determine and move us, of all men we were the most foolish and miserable; but seeing our hearts, in the consideration of the justice of our cause, & of the sincerity of our intentions, in acting conforme to it, does not condemne us; we have this confidence towards God, that as we are acquit & shall be justified before him; so shall we be recompenced and rewarded, to the aboundant compensation of all outward loses; even for these things, for which we are condem-

ned of men; so that that which is esteemed our folly, sin and misery, is and shall be reputed our righteousnes, wisdom and glory.

Albeit we have not the external advantages of power, riches and wordly policy, but the contrare to contend with, and endure; yet, seing the Word of God in our hands, doeth prosper and prevail to the gaining of immortal souls, the restraining of impiety, and the propagating of the savour of the true knowledge of Christ Jesus, in all places where it comes, notwithstanding of the opposition made unto us in this work; it will, on many accounts, be your *Lo.* wisdome, not to stand in contradictory tearmes thereto, least your *Lo.* be found to fight against God in the persons of his servants and people; for, we are assured, that this work and cause is of God, partly for its conformity to his holy word; & partly for its undeniable fruit and successe, in converting & saving of souls from sin, preserving and maintaining of its self, against the opposition it meets with on all hands; which we take for a signe of its being of God, as the Christians did of old in their debates for the Christian Religion against its adversaries, which under great opposition grew and prevailed exceedingly, although stript of all the outward advantages of worldly power and policy. If this cause be of God, and approven by him, as we nothing doubt,

doubt, it will not be in the power of the mightest to crush it. Men may afflict and put us to great sufferings (which to them will be a signe of perdition, but to us of salvation;) but while this Church continues Protestant, and hath God abiding in her, their contradiction will be in vaine, as is hitherto manifest. And a thowsand to one, but it resolve in their own ruine here & here after.

The mater of difference betwixt us and our adversaries, being in their owne confession (a popular argument they much use with the people) not foundamental, but indifferent, we humbly beg of your *Lo*, that for preventing of further confusions in this Church, & attaining of the true peace of the same, you will be pleased, to consider, whether it be better and safer for this Church, that the Christian Reformed Religion be totally ruined among us, for satisfying of a few; or a thing indifferent, & far removed from the vitals of Religion, be taken away, and not thus enforced by violence on so considerable a part of the subjects, who, for conscience sake, cannot receive, nor subject thereto? And knowing that a serious and impartial examination of this one question, if diligently pursued, would quickly determine your *Lo*, to courses quite opposite to these now prosecuted with so much heat against us; we intreat your *Lo*. not to give eare to these ca-

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lumnies and undue representations of the present case of affaires in this Church, made by our enemies, the *Prelates*, by which they labour to instigat to all this unjust and unseasonable violence, that will Produce bitter and lamentable effects to this & the succeeding generation, if not prevented in time.

Most noble & honourable Lords, we cannot but take notice of that too common prejudice entertained against Presbyterian Government, & instilled with so much artifice by our opposits in the mind of many, on which, they have alas too much advantag, through the love of sin, & natural enmity at the wholsome severity and power of the Christian Religion, that is predominant in all unregenerat persons; to wit, the strictnes & impartiality of Presbyterian Government in its exercise, against all sorts of scandals, in all degrees of Professours, the great as well as the meane; for we know, that while Presbytery was up and in vigour amongst us, the zeal and faithfulness of Ministers, in reprehending all sorts of sins, and exercising of discipline impartially, conforme to the commands and ruls of the word, without exception of persons, is that which hath caused all this dislike of, and rigour against Presbytery; and conciliat that much respect to, and love for Prelacy, as to eject the one, & bring in the other. We will not now enter on the debait, whether this strictnes

against

againſt ſin be the native product of Presbyterian Government, when exerciſed conforme to its principles; or the contrare the genuine conſequence of Prelacy, that neceſſarly reſults from its conſtituent & preſerving cauſes? Which were no great labour to make out. But leaving this, we humblie entreat your *Lo.* to have that patience towards us, as to ſuffer us to ſay. 1. In conformity to the principle of the Chriſtian profeſſion, it muſt be, in the confeſſion of all Chriſtians, mater of ſad regrait & lamentation, that in places, where the Chriſtian Religion is owned, zealous faithfulneſs againſt ſoul deſtroying ſins, ſhould be admited & received, as a prejudice againſt Miniſters & their Government; which ſhould commend & cry it up; yea that does endear it to all conſcientious Chriſtians, that rightly underſtand their owne Profeſſion. Muſt it not be a terrible length, this generation is gone, in declineing from the power of Religion; when that, which is its excellency & glory in the ſight of God & good men, is become the occaſion & mater of its diſlike & reproach? Can there be a fuller evidence and diſcovery of the predomining & prevailing power of naturs enmity, in Profeſſours, over the life of true godlineſs; and their being given up to the luſts & ſinful inclinations of their owne hearts, that thus ſets them in oppoſition to the meanes, appointed for their delivery from the

dominion & power of damning sins: whither are we gone, and what may we expect will be the hight of our defection, and the judgment of it, if Professours put themselves in such a plaine & open professed contradiction to their Christian Profession? 2. Let not your *Lo.* think, we say this with an intention to justify any failing, in this mater, commited by any of our perswasion, that shall be made appear to be such from the Word of God, & our Professed principles. And although we cannot condemne all the instances, that are now disapproved by our antagonists; yet we grant, there were considerable escapes, in preaching & exercise of discipline, which were the effects of imprudence & passion in some, and of wordly inclinations & designes in others of corrupt minds; who to raise themselves in this world, and for that end, to gaine the favour of persons of leading influence & power, keept no measure, but rune to strang hights of zeal against some sins, while they connived at others; but seing by their compliances with the cryed-up cause of these times, they do now declare to all the world that they vvere never of us; how unjustly are their wicked follies imputed to our Government and vvay. But for all the instances given in against us, and the hideous cry raised after them, yet vve must say, the greatest and most common failing among Ministers, vvas in the

defect, in that the moſt vvere not ſo diligent, faithful & impartial, in the application of the vvord to the ſins of the times, perſonal rebukes & cenſures, as they ſhould have been; as (alas) yvas too viſible & obſerved by many; for vvhich novv they bear their rebuke, in that many of thoſe are now become their cruel perſecutors, to whom they were ſinfully ſparing & indulgent. Moreover, let it be granted, that many of theſe inſtances were in the exceſſe unjuſtifiable; yet if the conſtitution and principles of Presbyterian Government were not for, but againſt them, it cannot be charged with theſe: they muſt be the faults of the perſons, and not of the Government; otherwiſe all Governments muſt be condemned, as guilty of all the mal-adminiſtrations, commited by Governours; which all acknowledg to be abſurd? But when any of the contrare minded ſhall demonſtrat theſe to be the native product of our principles for doctrine and Government, they ſhall be conſidered, & according to the conviction they give of the ſame, they ſhall be acknowledged. But will your *Lo.* be pleaſed, to conſider the ſad & deplorable extreme our antagoniſts are run into, who medle not with any ſort of ſcandals, except a few and theſe in the meanner & lower degree of perſons, over looking all in the more opulent and great; which hath encouraged wickedneſs to

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lift up its head, and to diffuse its self thorow all ranks without control, to the infecting of this Church with all kindes of scandals; which, no doubt, will resolve either into the total ruine of the Protestant Religion, or els in sad desolating judgments, on this land; and if it come this length (which we earnestly beg of the Lord he would prevent, by pouring out of a Spirit of repentance and reformation on us) where will be our advantage by *Prelacy*, that is now so much extolled?

Therefore not loving to trouble your *Lo.* any further, we shall adde but this humble and earnest request; that your *Lo.* would be pleased, to make some due and just representation of the true State and low condition of this Church, unto his *Maj.* who (we hope) through your *Lo.* intercession will, in his wisdome and clemency finde out some just expedient, for relieving of this Church of her oppressing evils under which she groans; and undoing of these heavy burdens, that lye on us: for which we are your *Lo.* humble petitioners, and had been so alittle sooner, if we had not been discouraged by lawes anent Church maters, that seem to us, to close all door of accesse to his *Maj.* and your *Lo.* for representing our just greivances this way. If we may not obtaine this reasonable and just request (as we suppose) there is not another refuge left us, but to referre our cause to the righteous tribunal of the just and almighty God, where your *Lo.* and we will stand on even ground, and have judgment passed without respect of persons.

An Apology for, or vindication of the oppressed persecuted Ministers, and Professors of the Presbyterian Reformed Religion, in the Church of *Scotland*, emitted in the defence of them, and the cause for which they suffer.

The Introduction.

IT is not unknown (as we suppose) to the Churches of Christ, in the Islands of Britain and Ireland, and other parts of the Christian World, what persecutions, upon the introduction of Prelacy in the Year 1662. the partie, called Presbyterian, *hath suffered, especially in the Church of* Scotland, *and yet lyeth under, throw the implacable and violent rage of their adversaries, the Prelates and their adherents: who having got the Civil powers on their side, have prevailed to the enacting of such lawes, that these (who from the conscience of duty towards God, and sense of the obligations of their Covenants and Oaths, lying on them and these Churches, cannot comply with, nor give obedience unto) are not only exposed to bitter and hard sufferings, for a considerable time; but loaded with all sort of reproach, and represented as rebellious and disloyal to Authority, contrary to their known principles and actings. It is not the design of this undertaking to descend into the consideration of the maine cause of our sufferings, nor yet to lay any Odium on our Rulers, in the*

prejudice of their just authority ; (as the righteous judge the world knowes , and we hope will make manifest in due time) but to clear some Necessary truths and duties ; and to vindicat some of our practises , from the unjust aspersions of adversaries ; who by lies and unjust representations of our principles and carriage , do publickly and privatly defame and misrepresent to Authority and others , our behaviour under the present course of affairs : an artifice they have used of old and late , for ingratiating of themselves , and their interests , into the favour of our Rulers , and sharpening of the edge of persecution against us ; in which they have had no small success. If it were not for the Interests of truth and Religion , which , through the hot contests and debates of these times (actuated by ambition and covetousness , on the one hand , and the love of truth , on the other) are in hazard to suffer shipwrack , we incline rather to keep silence ; and possesse our souls in patience under the present violence , usual though against us ; (as our too much silence hitherto does sufficiently witness) but finding that the interests of the Gospel and the concerns of immortal souls , are struck at , and are like to suffer no small prejudice through our silence , we have put on a resolution , to give to the Christian world an account of the grounds of our practises , for which , we are this day so much reproached and persecuted. And seing there is no access in the ordinarie road , to give a due and just information of our case , to our Superioures , by supplications , petitions and remonstrances , (allowed by scripture and nature light) by reason of the influence & power of our adversaries : we cannot but expect that much justice from all , as to excuse us , for doing of this , in this way , which the vindication of truth and of ourselves for its sake , in the present juncture , make every way so necessary : for finding , in the present state of things , that we cannot , without betraying of the

Gospel

Goſpel, and of our immortal ſouls, (for which as Miniſters and Chriſtians we are called to contend, on all higheſt paines) keep any longer ſilence; but that we muſt give warning to all, of the imminent dangers, that threaten Religion, in its purity and power; we look upon it, as our indiſpenſible duty, by clearing truths and practiſes, (ſo much now condemned) to endeavour the prevention, and recovery of all from the ſnares, they are in danger of, and engaged into: wherefore, in all Chriſtian ſobriety and humility, we crave leave, to open our hearts and mindes to all, as they are concerned in our caſe. 1. *Anent the cruel and iniquous procedour uſed againſt us.* 2. *Our practiſe of preaching and hearing of the Goſpel of Chriſt, by Miniſters and people, yet adhering to the covenanted work of Reformation, in oppoſition to* Prelacy *and* Eraſtianiſme. 3. *Our not approving nor allowing of the late indulgence, although, as to the preaching part of it, it hath been by ſome of us, in ſo far practiſed.* 4. *and laſtly, anent the Supremacy Eccleſiaſtical, as it is now eſtabliſhed in his Majeſties perſon, and ſenſed by law.*

SECT. I.

Of the act of Glaſgow, *with raiſons why ſubmiſſion could not be given to Prelacy.*

WE love not to inſiſt on the *firſt*, and if it were not connected with ſome other things, that more concearne the cauſe, and touch upon it, then any outward intereſt of ours; we would incline rather to bury it, in perpetual oblivion, then thus to raike the aſhes of paſt and preſent actions; the mentioning of which cannot but reflect on ſome, whoſe reputation is dearer

to us, then they will readily admit themselves to be
leeve: But we must not decline, what in the prese
case is necessarie for vindicating of our righteous cause
struck at and wounded through our sides. We shal
only touch a few instances of many, that might b
produced, and are yet fresh in the memories of thi
generation; and we fear (if Historians prove impar
tial) will speak to the disgrace of these times, in th
succeeding ages. As *first*, That almost unparallele
Act of the Councel at *Glasgow Octob.* 1662. whereb
at one stroke, a number of Ministers above 300, with
out all legal precedour, were violently cast out o
their livelyhoods, and inhibited the exercise of the
Ministery; and thereby a great number of Congreg
tions laid desolate. And for any thing knewn to th
Councel at their making and publishing of this Act
all the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland* (a very fe
excepted) might have been thrust out and ejected ther
by, and so the whole Church laid waste, and dispo
sessed of the Gospel and it's ordinances; in whic
condition, shee might have continued long enough
to such a hight of prejudice and loss, which th
much-cryed-up good of *Prelacy* could never ha
compensat, in this or the following age. Was it not
vident (from the astonishment, that the disappoin
ment of the designe of this Act had on our Rulers,
those that did not obey the law in subjecting to Prelac
on it's emission) that it was passed without mature d
liberation, and was influenced by the impatient Z
& violent instigation of the Prelats, to the precipitati
of all Counsels; which since hath been lamented, &
a little regrated by many of that party, who have nev
to this day, fallen on right methods & wayes of curin
th

he distempers & confusions, caused by this act to the Church of God amongst us. We remember of none like to this, but that of the *Interim* of *Germany* in the time of *Charl.* the *V.* A precedent, we think, that should not have been imitated, by any Christian protestant State, considering it's wicked designe, & bad success to it's contrivers.

At the passing of this Act of Councel, it was not unknown to all, that the Ministers ejected by it, were, for the generality of them, young men, educated and indoctrinat in the Presbyterian principles; neither could it, in rational judgment, be supposed, that in such a sudden and unexpected revolution of affairs, in Church and state, persons of any conscience, could so suddenly be moved to change the Principles they had received, and so long been in the practice of, without the least offer of any convincing reason to the contrary. In this case, to inflict so heavy a punishment on Ministers and Congregations, without any endeavours previously used, for their information, looks to be a straech, beyond the bounds of charity and justice; which, according to all laws, Divine, ecclesiastick and civil, allows time and patience, in dealing with persons, erring in the matters of God, for bringing them to the conviction of their errours, before the passing & inflicting of a sentence; a piece of justice observed in the darkest times of Popery, and hottest persecutions on the Church of God, as is evident from the records of these times. 2. Besides, in all executions of laws on persons found transgressing the same, there useth to preceed the sentence, and infliction of the penalty, a judicial trial and conviction of the transgression; the natural right and priviledge of all subjects, observed in all well governed States in the World, whether Chri-

stian or heathenish: For, in the administration of justice to the subjects, there ought to be an application of the law to persons, supposed guilty of it's violation by a judicial sentence, not only adjudging them to the penalty, but declareing the guilt, as the meritorious cause of such punishments; which cannot be done without a judicial trial and conviction by confession or witnesses: But in our case no such thing was observed, no not so much as an hearing allowed us.

Moreover, in this act, the Ministers of the Gospel were, under highest paines, discharged and forbidden the exercise of their Ministery, which they had received from the Lord, and not from the State; and this antecedent to any Church sentence, or ecclesiastical conviction of guilt, deserving so heavy a punishment: an encroachment on Church power, without a precedent in this Church, and in all others except that of the *Interim* of *Germany*, condemned, of that very head, both by Popish and Protestant writters as a reatch beyond the Limits, set to the Magistrats power, in the word of God. Is there not here a Punishment, formally ecclesiastick, inflicted by the Magistrat, without owning of the Church, to whom the infliction of such punishments does properly belong and by whom they were, time out of minde, exercised? But this with other Acts of the like nature, which followed, was suitable to the base and foundation, on which the new superstructure of Church government was founded and built, the Supremacy. How visible is it from this act, the way used for bringing in of prelacy, the frame of the Acts of Parliament, anent it and the *Supremacy* and the procedour in executing of the same; the

the designe was not only to subject the Church wholly to the State, but to rob her of all power; which the prelates perceiving, laboured to help, in their after outting of Ministers not comprehended in this Act; some of them complaining, that Ministers should be exautorated by the Magistrat, without any Church sentence preceding: but more of this afterwards.

But supposing, this to be within the compasse of the Magistrats power; yet how unproportionat was the penalty to the alleaged crime? if there had been heresy in doctrine, or scandals in life & conversation, a justification might have been made of this sentence; but for simple non-conformity to prelacy, that had been by Church & State exploded from amongst us, as an high corruption in the government of the Church; and its reentry barred with the solemnest Covenants and oaths, that ever any Church or Nation came under: we say, for such a crime in such a case, to take from Ministers, as men, their lively hoods; and as Ministers, their Ministery (dearer to them then their lives) is a punishment, when weighted in the ballances of equitie and justice, much beyond (we are sure) the demerit of the cause; especially considering, that the Persones imposeing conformity, and punishing others so severely for refusing it, were the same (for the most part) that had made and enacted lawes, severe enough against it. What? is prelacy a jewel of so much worth, that the Church of God cannot be well without it? have we not found the contrare, from the experience of past and present times? Although we should be judged uncharitable in this, yet we must say it, that they, who see not this, do either shut their eyes throw carnal interest, or wilfull prejudice, against

againſt all evidence, that not only Scripture but the effects of Prelacy in this Church, affords to all men; Or else fight againſt their light. If we take our meaſures, by the true intereſts of the Church, or theſe things, wherein her true welfare does conſiſt, we ſhall undoubtedly and undeniably ſee, that prelacy is not of that worth and uſe, to the Church of God, as to inflict ſuch grievous punishments on Non-compliers with it; ſure we are, ſoundneſs of doctrine, purity of worſhip and holineſs of life have flouriſhed in this Church, without it; and ſince its erection, theſe have come under a ſad decay.

Obj. But many place the demerite of theſe ſevere puniſhments, in the diſobedience to the lawes eſtabliſhing Prelacy; the now great cry of theſe engadged in the preſent courſe, for juſtifying of all enormities, committed in the adminiſtrations of government?

Anſ. To this we ſay, firſt, that all Divines and Lawyers affert, if non-obedience be ſeperated from contempt of authority, (as in many caſes it may be) that the demerit of diſobedience, is not rigourouſly to be purſued with punishments, eſpecially of ſo high a nature, as theſe inflicted on us, for meer non-conformity; and the reaſon they give, is becauſe, there are and may be ſuch things in non-obedience, as will, to righteous judges, not only alleviat the guilt thereof, but diſcharge it from diſobedience, let be contempt of authority; as invincible ignorance, inability, fits of paſſion, the tendencie of the thing commanded, in ſome caſes, to the everting of the end of the law, which in ſuch caſes, is preſumed not to be the will of the Law-makers) the diſpoſition & profeſſion of perſons to obedieinnce manifeſted, in all others things &c. if

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our known and professed principles, extant in our publict confessions and treatises on this head, with our actions in all other matters relating to authority, be admitted and beleved, we will have as much to say, for freeing of our non-obedience to lawes, in this matter, from contempt of authority, as any. Give us the just liberty of our Religion, in preferring of God, our absolute and Supream Soveraigne, to all others; and in yeelding to him that obedience, he requires of us in his word, and none shall be found more obedient to Authority, in all things that do not intrinch on this. We do solemnly professe, and in the sight of the alseeing God, who searches the hearts and reins, that this, and this only, is the cause, why we cannot give obedience, to the lawes establishing prelacy; for upon all the search, we have made, we cannot find a warrant for it in the word of God, that perfect rule of Religion and Rightcousnes; but find it contrare unto & against the precepts and institutions of Christ Iesus, anent the government of his house. This being our perswasion, we are not able to evite the force of these obligations of our Covenants and Oaths, made to God and one another, against it; to the strick observation of which, we are by commands and threatnings contained in the word, most indispensibly bound, and from which tyes, no humane power can loose us. Is it not a sad matter in this case, that we meet with no other thing from any, for satisfying our consciences, and bringing us the length of cheerful obedience in this thing, but the cry law, law; which, in the matters of God, can be no sure bottome to our consciences; seing we as Christians are under a law, antecedent and superior to that of mens.

Secondly. Where the guilt of diſobedience is truly found, yet the ſentence paſſed againſt it ought cheefly to reſpect the matter of the diſobedience, and according to the quality and circumſtances of it, the puniſhment ſhould be proportionated: there are no divines or lawyers (that we know of) but hold this; and it is, beyond diſput, evident from the judicial lawes of the *Iews*, enacted and eſtabliſhed by God himſelf, for the adminiſtration of juſtice, in that Common-wealth: for the guilt of diſobedience being alike, in all deeds contrare to law, diſobedience in ſmaller matters ſould have as heavy puniſhments inflicted on the contraveeners, as in greater; which all acknowledge to be a ſtrange ſoleciſme in government, contrare to all natural equity and juſtice, the baſis and ends of government.

Thirdly. And that our non-obedience to lawes erecting and eſtabliſhing prelacy, is ſo high a crime in itſelf, as to deſerve ſuch puniſhments, as have been ſtatute and execute upon us, we do not yet ſee; eſpecially while we conſider. (1.) The little evidence (as hath been ſaid) for it in the word of God; Some of that party have racked their witts, for finding out its divine right and inſtitution, as *Ioſeph Hall*, and ſome others; but with ſo little ſucceſſe, as hath forced many of them, to quite that plea, and take them to arguments of another nature. (2.) The confeſſions of ſome, who plead for the uſfulneſs of prelacy, to the *well*, but not to the *being* of the political Miniſterial Church; which they grant may be ſuch without it, as moſt of the former opinion yeeld. (3.) Others that lean not to Scripture for the right of prelacy in the Church, found it upon Eccleſiaſtick conſtitutions, canons & cuſtomes; which they take

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to be the Interpreters of Scripture in this debate, as *Downhame* and others with him, that make moſt uſe of antiquity. (4.) Others more moderat, pious and more learned then the reſt, do ſo clip its wings, that they bring it to a meer conſtant preſidency, in the meetings of presbyters, for government; making it a pure non-entity, as to what is eſtabliſhed by law amongſt us; and for which they bring no Scripture: of which judgment was that godly and learned Biſhop *Uſher*, who, for knowledge in all the controverſies of the Church, eſpecially in Antiquity, was *Nemini ſecundus*. (5.) Some others argue for it, as a matter of indifferency, that may be received or rejected, as Churches and ſtates ſee it fits their intereſts; aſſerting, that all its authority and goodneſs depends upon and flowes from the power, that brings it in, thus *Stillingfleet*. (6.) Some of that party have fallen on a new method, for juſtifying its divine right (being ſtraitened, as it ſeems, with our arguments, and the weakneſs of their owne) alleadging that Presbyters were not inſtitute in Scripture-times, by the Apoſtles; & that all Miniſters, mentioned in the Scriptures, were Biſhops, in the ſenſe controverted, as Doctor *Hammond*; but his evidence from Scripture and antiquity, is ſo dimme, that (for any thing we know) he hath gained few, or none, to follow him in this. (7.) Theſe of the court party, place all its goodneſs in the authority & lawes eſtabliſhing it; granting it ſignifies nothing antecedently to theſe. (8.) If we ſhall conſider prelacy, and view it in its ſeveral parts, as it is by law conſtitute and ſetled amongſt us, and bring them to the teſt and rule of the word of God, that we may give judgment of them, according to it; how little of prelacy will be found to be of divine right, even in

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the confeſſion of our adverſaries: of all that have appeared on the feild for its defence, there is none, that ever pleaded ſcriptural inſtitutions, precepts and inſtances, for the Lordly titles, eminencies, and wordly dignities of the Prelats, that are now annexed to their office; nor yet for their civil places and power in the State; nor for their ſeveral orders, and degrees, as *Primats*, *Metropolitans*; *Archbishops &c:* Or for the like among their dependents, in their numerous and various diſtinctions of degrees of ſuperiorities, and ſubordinations; as *Vicars*, *Chancelors*, *Deans*, *Archdeacons*, *Subdeans*, *Deacons*, *Parsons &c.* whoever hitaherto did put pen to paper, and contended for the divine right of prelacy, never opened a mouth to plead either Scripture or antiquity for theſe (except Doctor *Hammond* who argues for *Archbiſhops:* and what is prelacy, in its conſtitution amongſt us, without them; The only thing debated betwixt us and our Antagoniſts anent it, is the ſuperiority of one Paſtor over other Paſtors, and their reſpective congregations, to the probation of which, from ſcripture and pure Antiquity, there are two things, that muſt of neceſſity be made out from theſe: firſt the ſole power of Ordination and Juriſdiction, and ſecondly Dioceſan Churches made up of ſeveral leſſer Churches and their reſpective Paſtores and Officers: in theſe does the eſſential difference lye (in their owne confeſſion) betwixt Biſhops & Presbyters or ordinare Paſtores; none of which two hath been proven from ſcripture and antiquity. And if that, which differences prelats from other Paſtores of the Church, be not made to appear from ſcripture, how will their office be of divine right? and how can it be expected from us, who are under ſuch ſtrait divine engadgments againſt

againſt it, that we ſhould comply therewith; and ſubmit to the lawes, injoining conformity thereto. We complaine of the ſubdolous and uningenuous way of our oppoſites, in this debate, who always keep in generals, and never condeſcend on the particular differences betwixt Prelates and Ordinare Paſtores; nor undertake to prove theſe: and the truth is they cannot: for they are forced to confeſſe, that it is clear from antiquity, that Presbyters have ordained, ſometimes in conjunction with Biſhops, and ſometimes without them: And for dioceſan Churches with one fixed paſtor overſeeing other Paſtores and their flocks, we cannot meet with the leaſt probable evidence, from ſcripture and pure antiquity: we find no argument from our adverſaries concluding this. It is empty arguing to ſay; there were Apoſtles, there were Prieſts and Highprieſts in the Old Teſtament; there were ſeven Angels in the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*; therefore there muſt be Biſhops now: If they will from ſcripture make out the difference now aſſigned betwixt Prelats & Presbyters, in theſe inſtances of the Apoſtles, Prieſts and Angels, we ſhall yeeld the cauſe. Let none therefore blame us, in holding to this as a neceſſare conſequence of our Antagoniſts ſuccumbing in the probation of theſe things; that a parity among the Miniſters of the Goſpel, in point of power or office, is of divine right; for if in the inſtitution of the Miniſtery, there be alike power given to all called thereto, there can be no ſuperiority of one above another by divine right. (9.) It is a queſtion much debated among the Popiſh ſchoolmen, and in which they are not agreed to this day; whether Prelacy be an order or office diſtinct from that of Presbyters, or only a different degree of the ſame office with

with Presbyters, including no power formally distinct from theirs: which last opinion asserts, that all power, acclaimed by the prelats, is formally in Presbyters; so that by office they are empowered to, and may doe all that the prelats pretend to. How hotly and stiffly was this question tossed in the Councel of *Trent*, betwixt the *Italian*, *Gallican* and *Spanish* divines? which for this cause received no decision in this Councel, but was left undetermined as before; As is to be seen from the History of the said Councel. (10.) If any will consider our adversaries arguments for prelacy, and compare them with the arguments of Papists, especially *Bellarmins* for the Papacy, they shall finde, that they plead as strongly for the Pope or an Universal Bishop to the Catholick Church, as for the Prelat or Bishop, now controverted betwixt us, as wil be made appear by a particular condescension, if our intended brevity would suffer it. We referre such as question this to the arguments of both; and upon an impartial collation of the same, we nothing doubt, but it will be manifest. Doth not the much courted and endeavoured reconciliation with *Rome* by the prelatical party, in former and later times, with their concessions to them, for making way to this agreement, speak this with full evidence? As their denying the Pope to be the Antichrist; their granting a primacy to him over the Catholick Church; their purgeing the Romane Church of Idolatry and superstition; their asserting the difference betwixt Papists and us, in doctrine, worship and government, not to be fundamental, nor on their part damnable, &c. All which discover to the world the native tendency of prelacy, and what it will (if it continue) ultimatly resolve into. (11.) Do not the

the opinions of prelatists, their practises, the ways taken for bringing in and establishing of Prelacy among us; reflect upon and condemne all the reformed Churches and their divines, (except *Scultetus*) who, in their confessions, treatises & reformations conforme thereto, disclame prelacy, as no office of divine appointment? As will be evident to any that peruse them. We know there was a *Pamphlet* emitted in the beginning of prelacyes last introduction, that undertakes to prove the contrare; but it is so destitute of all evidence of truth, that we wonder exceedingly at the impudence & affrontednes of the author, in alleadging of *Calvine, Beza, Buter &c.* for prelacy; who in their practise and writings have argued and debated against it. Did not this Author know, that their writings are extant, and others as much versed therein as himself? But the unjust know no shame. (12.) As prelacy or prelatical government, in its constitution and exercise, is a compound of additions to the Word of God, which for want of its authority we reject; so presbytery or presbyterian government, in the confession of our Opposites, is, in all its parts, of divine institution or right; which we offer to make out from scripture and the concessions of our Antagonists; who first yeeld all our Church Officers (except Ruling elders) to be of divine appointment, (Doctor *Hammond* only excepted) granting, that presbyters or ordinare Pastores and Deacons, to be institute by the Apostles, and alwayes used in the Church to this day? they likewise grant the power of ordination and jurisdiction in Presbyters, till of late; As also the meetings of Pastores lesser and greater for government and discipline, and all the particularities of power anent these, asserted by and formerly exercised among

among us? We think strange of *Stillingfleet*, in denying of Presbytery to be of Divine institution, who yeelds all we seek; for if all the former be of Scriptural institution and practise, must it not be of divine right, even as to its forme? We cannot forbear to declare our resentments to the world, of the high indignities done to our Royal and great *Master*, *Christ Jesus*, and his blessed word, the holy Scripture; in that. 1. The forme of the government of his house is asserted to be mutable, at the pleasure of men, and made capable of any forme they please to assigne to the same. Was it ever heard in the world, that the forme of any government was taken from the Officers thereof, and not from the Supream head, in whom the Legislative power is lodged? All that ever treated of governments, and spoke to their different forms, did always found their forms on the head, and not on the Officers of it? Is not *Christ Jesus* the *Supream* and *only Head of the Church*, by divine appointment? Are not ordinare Pastores or Presbyters found institute in the word, with all the parts of their power, that we afterwards grant to them? &c Will it not then necessarily follow, that the forme is of divine right, both in the head and officers; which is truely *Monarchicall*, and not alterable at the will of any? 2. For making way to this, the sufficiency and perfection of the holy Scripturs, as to matters of obedience and practice in the Church, is denied, and thereby the fundation of the Protestant Religion is shaken. How inconsistent is this with their granting the perfection of the Scripturs, in maters of faith? For if all maters of obedience be first and primarily Maters of faith, must not they be perfect in these also? How our

Oppositts

Oppoſits will defend our arguments for the perfe-
ction of the Scripturs, in matters of faith and manners,
gainſt the Papiſts (who in this ſpeak more conſequen-
ially then the Prelatiſts) and maintaine the former aſſer-
ion, is unintelligible to us. For our arguments plead
s much and as ſtrongly for their perfection, in the one,
s in the other. But muſt it not be a deſperat cauſe that
eeds ſuch a prop to ſupport it? (13.) In the laſt place,
We humbly offer the following particulars to be conſi-
ered by all; nothing doubting that, when they are
duely and ſeriouſly weighted, it will ſoone appear that
our exceptions againſt Prelacy, are not light and
groundleſs. As 1. There is no good to the Church
and immortal ſouls attainable by Prelacy, that may not
be win at without it. It is a ſure truth, that every
ordinance of Divine inſtitution hath it's proper good
to the Church, in order to which, as it's end, it was
appointed by Chriſt, which is not eaſily reachable by
other ordinances: As will appear to any on a particular
condeſcenſion: for as there is nothing defective in di-
vine inſtitutions; ſo there is nothing redundant and ſu-
perfluous. Now we deſire to know, what is that good
to the Church and immortal ſouls, that cannot be ob-
tained without Prelacy? let our Antagoniſts give in-
ſtances. If they think that ordination and jurisdiction
is the good that the Church hath by prelacy; we offer to
prove from Scripture and antiquity (as hath been done
before us without a reply, yea and granted by many of
them) that Presbyters have the power of ordination
and jurisdiction; and the truth is, it was never que-
ſtioned by any, but yeelded by all, till of late; for we
have not only inſtances in Scripture and antiquity, for
Presbyters exerciſing ordination and jurisdiction; but

the reason, that all gave for it, was, that the ministry conferred by ordination, consisting of the power of order and jurisdiction, as it's integral constituent parts persons ordained receive the power of both: If this be a truth, why may not the Church have these by Presbyters, as much to her advantage and benefite, as by Prelats? But some say, there can be no unity or peace in the Church without Prelacy. The contrary is evident from the Churches experience, in former & later times; for as the Church was never more rent and filled with contentions and schisms, then under & by Prelates, of which there are innumerable instances in history; so there hath been much flourishing, unity and peace, under Presbyters, in Churches that wanted Prelats; as is to be seen in the present case of the reformed Churches, and will be evident to any that is acquainted with and seen in the records of the Church: what unity & peace hath the Churches of *Britan* and *Ireland* beyond other reformed Churches, Yea is there not more of these among them, then is with us, at this day? But what sayes unity and peace in the Church, if they have not truth and righteousness for their cement and foundation, which are seldome the attendents of Prelacy. But some place the good of Prelacy, in the oversight and inspection, it takes of Ministers and their respective flockes (of which they use to boast much;) But reason and experience do fully convince, and leave us beyond all Doubt, that this good, is as easily and better wine at, by Presbyters, in their associated and presbyterated meetings, lesser and greater, then by prelats: what can prelats do in this, that may not, and hath not been done by Presbyters, to the great benefite of the Church? as is manifest from the experience of

this Church in preceeding times, and now not alittle confirmed by the contrare? Moreover in the act of restitution *Parl.* 1. S. 2. Act 1. it is given for one Reason, inducing to the bringing in and establishing of prelacy among us, that it is most suitable to Monarchy. What good this does or can bring to the Church, we cannot divine: we wish it had been instanced in the foresaid act: we know, the government of the Church, considered in its due latitude and extent, according to the presbyterian principles, is truely and properly Monarchical; for is not Christ Jesus the Supream and immediat head of the Church; and do not her officers act in her government in an immediat dependance upon and subordination to Him, as her King? So that if the Churches government being Monarchical be the good intended and meant, in this expression, it is as much attainable without prelacy, as by it; but we suppose, that this is not the good understood. *Next*, if by suteableness to Monarchy, be meant, that kinde of Authority and Dominion in Church officers, in and over the Church, that is exercised by kings and Monarchs, and hath been assumed by prelats, since ever they appeared in the Church: this is expressy discharged and forbidden to Church officers in her government. *Matth.* 20, 25. *Luk.* 22, 25. How much Emperours, Princes Kings and States have smarted by this dominion, is known in history: Some say, it is the superiority and subordination of Church officers and judicatories, that is understood in this act; This may be had, and hath been attained in the Church, under presbyterian government, both as to officers and judicatories; the Pastour is superior both to Elders and Deacons &c. the classicall presbytery is

above the congregational eldership; & the provincial synod above the presbytery &c. *Obj.* there is not the superiority of one above the rest; *Anſ.* but what good doth this either to Church or State? we know it hath brought much evil to both, but never any good, that might not have been wine at, yea and was not actually attained without it; they that judge otherwiſe, are bound to give inſtances, which we earneſtly beg they will doe: we know this brought forth the *Pope*, and did midwife *Antichriſt* into the Chriſtian world. But the thing we ſuppoſe, that is truly intended, is the bringing of the Church into a ſlavish dependence upon, and ſubjection to the Magiſtrat; for which, we confeſſe, prelacy is every way fitted: how excellently did it ſerve the *Pope*, in eſtabliſhing of his Dominion, and in bringing and keeping of all in ſubjection to him? and albeit ſince the reformation, the prelats changed their head, in taking on the Magiſtrat in the roome of the *Pope*, yet they retaine their uſe, which exceedingly endears them to worldly Princes, that affect domination in the houſe of God, but (as ſhall be proven afterwards) this is contrare to the fredome of Chriſts kingdome, his abſolute ſupremacy and dominion over the ſame; and is inconſiſtent with Chriſtain princes their profeſſed ſubjection thereto; ſo that this is no good, but and evill deſtructive of the true concerns of the Church. 2. It is no ſmall diſcovery to us of the evil and corruption of prelacy, that it is much approven, allowed and cryed up by all perſones of profane, diſſolute and debauched lives (except where it croſſes their wordly interests) and the reaſon of this is obvious to all, for as corrupt and wicked nature does diſlike all that is from God, as oppoſite to its wicked inclinations and wayes; ſo it loves

loves, and is in much liking with all that is friendly to, and does encourage it in theſe. Is it not viſible, that the encouragement, which flagitious and wicked perſones find for their impieties, under the wings of prelacy, is the true reaſon and cauſe, for which it is ſo liked and cryed up by ſuch? In this it is contrare to Presbytery in its due and faithfull exerciſe, which hath been, and yet to this day, is hated for its impartialitie, ſtrickneſs and ſeveritie againſt all ſorts of ſcandal, in all ranks of perſons high and low: for this we appeal to the general ſenſe and obſervation of all in theſe landes: can we think that courſe to be of God, which for this reaſon is approven by the generality of the wicked? 3. Beſides this, does not the prelates oppoſition to the godly (whom in rationall charity all are bound to judge ſuch) in reproaching, oppreſſing & perſecuting of them, to a ſtrange hight of ſeverity, who in profeſſion differ only from them in a point, that depends on the meer will and pleaſure of the Magiſtrat; we ſay, does not this declare, godlines to be their quarrel, and it to be inconſiſtent with, and contrare to their intereſts, which, we are ſure, cannot be the effect of theſe means and wayes inſtitute by God in his word, whoſe end and tendency is to promove godlines, and not to perſecute and deſtroy it; as is now done. And whoever conſider the conſtitution of prelacy, the rules for its exerciſe (to wit, the doctrines and opinions of prelats about Church-power and government) and the hight of Dominion, they lay clame to over the Church) will ſee, that of its ſelf, it muſt be an enemy to true godlines, while it crys up its forme, and layes it ſelf out for advanceing of it, in oppoſition to its power. 4. It is received for a ſure truth, among all proteſtants, that

as the renewed nature of the Godly does hate, and is an enemy, to all that is contrare to, and destructive of true godlineſs; ſo it is the evidence and ſigne of the evil and ſinfulneſs of a cauſe, when it is disliked & oppoſed by the generality of the truly ſober, judicious and humble Godly. If we shall apply this to prelacy, as it is eſtabliſhed and exerciſed amongſt us at this day, have we not cauſe to ſuſpect its corruption, and to judge its deſcent not to be of God? ſeing it is univerſally diſliked and hated by the truely Godly; which eminently appears in perſons converted from wickedneſs and ſin, in which they lived before converſion; what ever likeing they had to prelacy, or hatred to presbytery, immediatly upon their converſion, they drink in an averſation from and hatred of prelacy, and love to the contrare? We know, this was *objected* by *Independents* againſt presbyterians, when the controverſy about Church government was hot betwixt them? But. 1. This objection was without any true cauſe, as *Independents* were forced, afterwards, and at this day, to confeſſe; they finding upon trial, that the Godly of the Presbyterian perſwaſion, were exceedingly more numerous, then the other. 2. The difference betwixt them is very ſmall (which may be incident to perſones truly Godly, and conſiſtent with their grouth and exerciſe of godlineſs); and if there were a healing condeſcending temper, might be healed and removed; their difference lying mainly, in the authoritative ſubordination of Church judicatories and conſtitution of Churches, as to the qualities and engadgments of their conſtituent members; which when their one neſs in all other things about government, and their conceſſions to one another, in the little

little they differ about, is considered, might be quickly accomodated and taken up. But it is other wayes with prelacy, in its constitution and exercise with us; which, in its effects, attendants, and the basis it is setled upon, is found to be such a corruption in the government of the Church, and infect to others in Doctrine and Worship, that it becomes truely hateful to all the Godly, that give themselves up to the conduct and light of the Scripture, and make them their rule in the exercises of religion and godliness: far be it from us to think or say, that there is none of the prelatical gang, truely godly or pious. We know there hath been, and do beleeve, there are some such among them; but O how few, and how much have these few been looked upon, and persecuted by the rest, with an evil or jealous eye, so as they have been judged more ours, then theirs? we have not forgot the distinction, that on this head, was made in former times among the Bishops themselves, and how they were distinguished into *Puritan* and *Court Bishops*. Will not one of these two follow, either, that the generality of the Godly, (whom Christians walking according to the rule of the word must esteeme to be such) are under a strong delusion in their opinions about, and opposition to Prelacy; Or els (which is most likely for the reason formerly given) that Prelacy savours not of godliness, but in its native tendency is an enemy to it; which sayes it cannot be of God, but for trial and correction? 5. As the maine and chief qualification, the prelats require in their intrants into the ministery, and in the people they admit to ordinances, is submission to, and owning of them conforme to the present law, how insufficient and

scandalous soever they be, (which is overlooked and dispensed with in them); so their bitter opposition to and unceſſant perſecution of pious, able and faithful miniſters, that comply not with prelacy, declares to all, that it is not the good of the Church (that conſiſts in true knowledge and godlines) they ſeek; but the extending and eſtabliſhing of their tyrranous dominion over all, by miniſters and profeſſors ſubmiting thereto, without gainſaying of their impoſitions and commands. How contrare in this, is their way to the rules given in the word, for calling & ordaining of miniſters, 1 *Tim.* 3: 1,2, &c. *Tit.* 1: 5,6, &c. and the practiſe of the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Phil.* 1: 15. who rejoyced Verſ. 18. that Chriſt was preached, altho out of envy and oppoſition to him? Can that courſe be of God, which muſt be ſupported by ſuch wayes and means, that croſſe the directions and rules of the word anent Miniſters, and diſappoints the ends of the Goſpel and Miniſtery? Beleeve this who will, we cannot.

SECT. II.

What moved Miniſters to ſubmit to the act of Glaſgow; *& ſome remarks upon the* acts againſt conventicles, *and* ſuch as refuſe to depone againſt delinquents.

IT Hathbeen often *Objected* to us, both by friends and enemies; why did Miniſters and Congregations obey ſo quickly that act of the Councel at *Glaſgow*, in leaving and deſerting of one another; ſeing, by vertue of their divine mutual relation to one another,

ther, as paſtors and flocks, they were bound to cleave together, in performing and doing of all mutual duties, which by divine precepts and engadgments, they were bound to obſerve? *Anſ.* As we will not altogether juſtify our cariage, in that and ſeveral other particulars, in our way thorow theſe ſad times; (being willing to take with, and humble our ſouls for, all our imperfections and failings, that ſhall be diſcovered to us by any;) ſo there were ſome things, in the circumſtantiat caſe, that may plead for us, and alleviat the offence taken at our too general practice in that matter; As. 1. The ſuddenneſs of that act, which allowed very little or no time for deliberation, and coming to any ſolide reſolution, in a matter of ſuch weight and unuſuall practice, anent which, we had ſo few precedents in former times. All know, how puzling ſurpriſals uſe to be; and if there be not a preſent divine hand to guide and ſupport, under the power of temptation, with which ſurpriſals are ordinarly attended, all are in hazard, thorow the byaſſe of corruption, to miſcary, and in their reſolutions to turne to the wrong ſide: Miniſters and Profeſſors are men of the ſame corruptions and paſſions with others; and whatever obligations be on them for truth and righteouſneſs, and the leading of others, in the ſame; Yet throw darkneſs, the influence of corrupt affections, and temptations concurring therewith, (to which they are obnoxious as much, if not more, then others) they are ready to ſlip; in which, for the goſpels ſake, they ſhould be pitied and prayed for.

2. It had no little influence upon us in determining our reſolution to this, that our party, in our neighbouring

Churches in *England* and *Ireland*, upon the emission of an act of Parliament, disenabling all Ministers, that did not conforme to Prelacy, for the exercise of their Ministry, had quit their charges, and removed themselves to other parts; not thinking it safe to themselves, their people, the interests of religion, as it then stood, to justle with Authority, in continuing their Ministery with and among the people, contrare to the new lawes made against them; while we considered this leading example, with the reasons moveing them to it, we thought ourselves as much pressed therewith, as they. And, no doubt, if we had followed the contrare course, our Loyalty had been sadly reproached, and their practise made use of to aggravat our disloyal dispositions (with which we had been often branded, although falsly) to a great hight of contempt; which had, we grant, too much weight with us.

3. The maine designe, we had under consideration at that time, that did most exercise our thoughts, and take them up, was, how we might be preserved from the grand corruption, *Prelacy*, that did then enter into the Church: many questions, in order to it, were debated among us, for our mutual strengthening against the assaults of our common adversaries, which we, in rational fore sight, did apprehend would come upon us; never dreaming of this course, that was followed with us; which with one stroke cut the Gordian knots of many difficulties, with which we had often grapled, in our exercises and debats. In this unexpected course of providence, clearing our way, under many difficulties, we then thought it our happines, in being rid of, and deli-

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vered from many a ſnare; which, no doubt, made us give place more eaſily to the penal part of that act.

4. We being at that time unacquainted with ſuffering, and contending for the truth, in oppoſition to prevailing corruptions, in this way, itis not to be expected in rational charity, that we could come ſo ſuddenly, to that hight of reſolution and courage, as to venture on the utmoſt of hazards, that then did threaten the contraveeners of that act, and the laws upon which it was founded. *Suffering for righteouſneſs Phil.* 1: v. *laſt*, is imported to be a gift, as far above the ſtrength of nature, in our ſinful imperfect ſtate, as that of faith; as all finde when it comes to be their caſe. It is eaſy for onlookers to cenſure and condemne the failings of others, in perſecuting times, but it is not ſo eaſy to ſuffer: it requires the Spirit of power, love, and of a ſound minde, which is not quickly wine at by them, whom Chriſt calls to take up and bear his croſſe. We grant this gives no diſcharge of guilt, in not doing and ſuffering, as God cals; yet it cryes for compaſſion and forbearance from others, who, on this conſideration, ſhould be ſpareing in their cenſurs, knowing they are in the body, and liable to the like ſnares and infirmities.

5. As that deed was too much influenced with fear, and other corrupt paſſions and affections, both in Miniſters and People, (which did viſibly predodomine at that time,) ſo there was a palpable deſertion on the ſpirits of all, that rendered all counſells dark and perplexed, and in all deliberations, inclined to that which was freeſt from ſuffering, and poſitive compliance with *Prelacy*. Altho this doeth not

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diminish sin, nor warrant any sinful neglect, nor give any true ground of excuse for it; yet it cals for charitable constructions from others, where sincerity is apparent in the maine; as then it was to the conviction of all; yea to the refuting of these hard, unchristian, and bitter censures of many, who judged our former professions of Zeal for the work of reformation, in preceeding times, to have flowed from a corrupt byasse to the world and the things of it, discovered, we grant, in too many, formerly seeming Zealots, by their compliances at that time; from whom they tooke their measures, in judging of others.

6. It is to be adverted, and ought to be of great weight, in the consideration of this busines, that Ministers, consulting their congregations, especially the godly and judicious among them, were advised to lye by for some time, and the truth is, they seemed as unwilling to venture on the hazards of suffering, that threatned all, as Ministers. This we know was the reason, that most determined not a few, to that resolution and practice: and what could Ministers do in this case, especially, in so sudden a revolution, anent which they had the leading example of others, in other parts of the Iland?

Notwithstanding of all these, and much more, that might be said for charitable constructions of Ministers and Congregationes practice in this, at that time; yet we judge it the infirmity and sin of Congregations and Ministers, that they did not cleave to one another as Pastores and flocks. We doe not plead for Ministers keeping to the accessories of the Ministery, as kirks, stipends, manses, glebs, &c. which

which was, by divine precept, their right, but not in their power to hold; but we assert it was sin, that they continued not in the exercise of the Ministery, pastoral oversight of the flocks, keeping up the government of the Church, we had been in the possession of; and peoples not adhering to their Ministers, in hearing, and receiving of ordinances from them, and not affording them all due incouragement and maintenance; all which was done by Ministers and Churches, in times of sorer persecution then ours.

If the rigour and severity, that by this act, and its full execution, with others that followed thereon, for a considerable time, (which we forebear to mention) had ceased, and gone no furder, we would have looked on all, as little, and laboured to have borne the same, with that patience, meekness and resolution, that becomes Ministers & Christians, professing the name of Christ Jesus: but the engines and devices, that afterwards were set on foot, as the *High commission*, and several unchristian & illegal practises; with the over violent pressing of the people to a conformity in their capacity; with such illegal and inhumane usages by military force, (which alone without any stated and formed designe, gave the rise to that insurrection, in the Year 1666. and the blood that followed thereon, to the the full conviction of our Rulers, who then searched unto the bottom of that affaire) were straines so high; that cannot be justified by the most extended rules of Christian moderation and equity, that Rulers are bound to follow, in the exercise of government: although this heat of violence, was for some time,

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a little cooled with a shour of blood, and other dangerous consequences like to ensue; yet afterwards, fuel being by the *Prelats* brought and administrat unto it, it againe begins to take fire, and to break forth into strange kinde of laws, made (as it seems) to give a legal face to its proceedings; which in its former height it wanted; the the bounds of which it cannot yet keep, but (according to its genious) over the hedge it leaps, and gives a straine beyond these. It would be tedious to take an exact view of all the particular lawes made against us, by which, the foundation of our past and present sufferings have bin laid, and are like to be continued: therefore we shall only give instance in a few, from which, we may take our measurs, judging of the rest.

As, *first*, *Parl. 2. Carol. 2. Session 2. Act. 5.* intituled, *an act against conventicles*: As this act condemns all assemblies, convocations and meetings of the subjects, not expresly warranted of his majesty, (which will make many meetings and convocations of the subjects, now in use, illegal and unlawful) so by consequence, reflects on the meetings and assemblies, that Christ Jesus while here, his Apostles, Ministers and Christians held, in the primitive times; who not only keeped their meetings without, but against the acts and edicts of the magistrat, in these times: for if it be laid downe for a foundation in government, that the only right of convocating the subjects is proper to the Magistrat, what ever be the causes, occasions and ends of them; then the Apostles, Ministers, and professours will be found transgressors and enemies to government; who, although inhibited and discharged from meeting, yet did not

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forbear to assemble themselvs for worship and government. What a miserable strait are we brought to, that the meetings of the Lords people, now called *Conventicles*, cannot be condemned. but on the same grounds, the assemblies of the Church in persecuting times, must be judged dangerous, unlawful & seditious? But this is not the worst; for in this act not only preaching and expounding of scripture, by Ministers of Christ Iesus, (although in a family beside their own) is judged to make a conventicle and an unlawful meeting; but prayer also (a common duty of Christianity,) is declared to be of the same force; so that no nonconforming Minister or any other may pray together, on any occasion, or for any cause what soever, but they shall be reputed keepers of conventicles, and liable to the penalties adjudged by this law to such. Is prelacy come to this height of opposition to godliness, that it cannot stand and be secured, except the worship of God in Christian societies be laide aside, and its exercise discouraged (to which there needs no such incitments in these times, the generality of professors being prone enough of themselvs to prove negligent and slack in this matter) under the odious names of *Conventicles*, and by such penalties against them? Are we such odious abominable creatures, that none must joyne in Christian communion with us, in these means and duties of worship, that are of common obligation on all Christians; but it must be forborne and laid aside? or if we once open a mouth to and for God, in any society; we shall bring ourselves and others under the hazard of so severe penalties, which, in the pursuance of this law, have been inflicted on some, to the astonish-

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ment of its hearers? But moreover all such meetings, beside the imputation of sedition and other horrid evils, with which they are branded, are represented, as the seminaries of separation and rebellion: a charge, if true, that maketh them meritous of far heavier punishments, then some of these decreed against them: but from whence can this come? Not from the nature of these exercises, considered in themselves, which are nothing, but the performance of some necessary commanded duties of Religion, which all know to be the greatest means to, and cements of union and obedience, in Church and State: not from the mater that is preached and prayed; our principles for worship, doctrine, & government are known, being extant in our publick confessions, which are of a contrare tendency.

If any say, we preach principles of separation and rebellion. They, who assert this, are bound to make it out, of which we have heard nothing as yet, and should have been condescended on, and given for the ground of this act, and not the performance of these truly religious exercises, done by persones authorized and enabled thereto, by the commands of God. We require of all engadged against us, to do us that piece of common justice, they owe to all men, in the like case, that they will instance in the doctrines we preach, and in the mater we pray, wherein our meetings are become the seminaries of separation and rebellion, if they can: when this is done, we shall either give a satisfying answer to the charge, or else succumb to this act.

It is like, some place this charge, in our disobedience to the law. Then it comes from the law and

the Law makers, and not from these meetings and the persons that keep them; for antecedent to this law they were not in themselves seminaries of separation and rebellion, according to this objection: and if this be the effect of the law, it had been more safe to have forborne it, whose work should be, rather to prevent and remove the seeds of rebellion, then thus to sowe them. But this law in its narrative suppons these meetings to be such, antecedent to its enacting; but gives no hint at any reason for this heavy charge.

Others again fix the truth of this charge on our meetings, for our withdrawing of the people, from the allowed publict worship, and the persons authorized by law to dispense the same. If the act had only circumstantiated and described such meetings, as had this effect, and not taken in all religious Christian fellowship in the duties of worship, something might have been said for justifying of this act, in a conformity to the principle of Church-government, now setled by law, without a wound to true piety; but to make all meetings of Christians, wherein any part of worship is exercised (without an expresse licence from the *prelat*) seminaries of separation and rebellion, is in effect to condemne Christ, his Apostles, Ministers and Christians, who, in opposition to Heathenisme, Heresy, Profainnes and Schisme, have, under severe laws made against them, assembled and met together, for communion in the worship of God; whose assemblies have been accounted unlawful Conventicles, and loaded with many of these evils, that are now charged on ours. Dar any, professing himself a Christian, say, that

the meetings of Christ, his Apostles and Ministers, in houses and feilds, (who had the occasion of the Synagogues, the ordinare allowed places for meeting in worship) were guilty of separation and rebellion, (although charged with these) or did sow the seeds of these evils? Although none will affirme this, yet we undertake to make it out, from the frame of this act, as it now stands. Oh that such a law should be found in the records of this Nation, which will speak (if ever we returne to ourselves) to the shame and disgrace of these times. But, as to our separation from the authorized publict worship, with which some with great confidence, brand us, we shall consider it afterwards, and see whether they or we be the separatists.

We forbear to speak to the penalties statute in this act, against the contraveeners of it; which on many accounts might be made to appear, to be far beyond the demerite of the crime, and an imitation of the popish cruelty, who punished the Professors of the truth with punishments equal to those inflicted for treason; in which this act is not short that adjudge the keepers of field Conventicles, to death and confiscation of goods.

In the next place, it adds not alittle to our griefs under our present sufferings; that although there be penal lawes against *Papists*, and other heterodox persons, yet no notice is taken of them, nor any execution of the law upon them; yea in one act of Parl. *Caroli. 2. Session 2. Act. 7.* they are exeemed from the guilt and severity decreed against us: which seem strange to us, when theirs and our principles, even in matters of civil government, are compared; them

in the confeſſions of all *Proteſtants*, are found to be incompatible with, and ſubverſive of that obedience and allegeance, that is due from ſubjects to magiſtrats, ſuppoſed by them heretical: which was the true cauſe of the ſevere laws, made againſt them, that for ſome time, (from the beginning of the reformation) were put to ſome execution; but as to any execution now, ſlackened and and laid by, as an *almanack* out of date. Are their principles and deſigns changed, or their number any fewer? yea is it not encreaſed, beyond what they have been ſince the reformation? But poor we are laid open to the lash of the ſevere laws, enacted againſt us, and all wayes taken to crush us and our cauſe, who owne no other principles, but theſe, that are either implicitly or explicitly aſſerted, by all *Proteſtants*, which are known to the world, to be corroborative of government, and ſuch as make way for all juſt obedience from the Subject to the ſame.

To make way for the full and ſure execution of this law, there is another enacted Parl. *Caroli.* 2. *Seſſion.* 2. Act. 2. Intituled *an act againſt thoſe, who refuſe to depone againſt delinquents*; which is particularly deſigned, for comeing at full information, againſt *Conventicles* and *Conventicle keepers*; as is expreſſed in the body of that act; but ſo conceived and framed, as it anſwers to that oath *de ſuper inquirendis*, uſed by the *Papiſts* in their inquiſition; (condemned by all Proteſtant Divines, for its oppoſition to juſtice, mercy and equity) for *firſt*, no ſort of perſons are exeemed, the Father againſt the ſon, the husband againſt the wife, &c. were the relations never ſo near, no exception of them is made in this act,

which use to be admitted in all other crimes, except that of treason. *Next* by this act, the deponent (whoever he be) is oblidged to answer all interrogations and questions proposed to him, although he hath had no previous consideration of them, which in all other crimes used formerly to be allowed; that so the deponent might answer from mature and sure knowledge, which here is not granted. What a foundation is hereby laid for the molestation of the subject? Shall we be that unmerciful and unjust to all men, yea to our neareſt and deareſt relations, as to reveal that of them. which, if keept secret, brings no prejudice to Church or State: And if revealed, will ruine them, in this present world; and that for a mater, that antecedent to the law, is no transgression before God; but the doing of a necessare duty? An invention (we must say) framed against the good and consciencious, who cannot escape by this law; and for the encouraging of the bad to the persecuting of such, who throw the power of their lusts, are at liberty to say, and do, what they list. Are these the fruits of *Prelacy*, that most endeared it to us? Whither are we gone? Shall we thus fight against heaven, to reach a poor handful of persons, that are able to do nothing, but to look up to God, and sigh to him, for these evils, that, no doubt, are procureing and bringing dismal and sad dayes on this land? We forebear to anatomiz these and other acts of the like nature, and to give judgment to every clause and part of the same; but leave them to the impartial consideration of all concerned, to whom the effects thereof may afterwards speak more, then we love to utter, at this time. Only, in all humi-

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lity, we offer two things, to be obſerved (which are the obſervations of not a few) that theſe and other acts do pave the way to all ſort of cruel perſecution, if a furder declenſion in religion ſhall happen to follow, (which we beg the Lord in his rich mercy to this nation would prevent.) Rulers are ſubject to erre, in the matters of God, as well as others; (as the inſtances of all ages leave beyond debat;) and if others ſhall ariſe after us, that incline to *popery*, or any other falſe Religion, are there not lawes made to their hands by us, that will facilitat their work, and make it moſt eaſy? What have they more to do, but to reſcind ſome, very few in regaird of theſe that once were, and to execute thoſe they finde in force and on record, for the perſecuting of all opponents, to the height of crulty. *Next* there needs no act of Parliament to this change, and introduction of another Religion: an act from the King, recorded in the Councel bookes, and ſufficiently published (which is declared to be of ſufficient force and obligation about this mater) is enabled by law to do all. An act without a precedent in this nation, when conſidered in its full latitude and extent.

From what is ſaid anent theſe acts, any may gather the true reaſons of our refuſeing the Bond (lately framed by the Councel) that takes us engaged againſt Conventicles, (as they are called) and was enforced by violence on us. Not pretending to much knowledge in the lawes, we have alwayes underſtood, bonds to be voluntare, and firſt to proceed from perſons found guilty, and ſentenced by the judge, conforme to the law; which the clemency of the Magiſtrat doeth often ſuſpend or remit, upon the guiltys

offered and voluntare engagment for better behaviour, in times comeing; and never required of nor imposed on persons, not proven nor found guilty. The truth is, if this violenting imposition of bonds, be thus allowed and practised, what ground will there be thereby laid down, for the trouble and molestation of the subjects? And who can promise to himself security from the oppression of others, that, out of malice or covetous designes, may, on any pretence, give information against others, altho never so quiet and peaceable?

SECT. III.

The Ministers preaching and peoples hearing vindicated: and foure Objections answered.

HAving thus far opened our hearts, and touched at some things, that are truly greivous to us; not so much for what we have suffered, as for the fear of what is like to be the consequences of the engines, framed and set on foot, for perpetuating ours and the Churches oppressions, in this and the following generations: we shall in the next place give an accompt of our practise, in preaching and hearing of the Gospel, dispensing and receiving of ordinances, at and from the hands of the ejected Ministers; the new cause of these heavy acts, sentences and punishments inflicted on us, for the same: in doing of which we shall, first, in all singlness of heart, bring forth the true grounds and reasons, binding our consciences, to these practises; and then shall take off the exceptions that are most used against us.

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Our practiſe, in this mater, we build on ſuch foundations, that all Chriſtians, eſpecially Proteſtants, by vertue of their profeſſed ſubjection to Chriſt Jeſus, (our only King and Law giver in the houſe of our God) are bound to owne and adhere to, and from which they cannot recede, without contradicting of the ſaid profeſſion, and doing manifeſt violence to the law and word of Chriſt, the holy Scriptures, our only ſtatute and law-book, in all matters of doctrine, worship and government. If on bringing our caſe to them, it ſhall be found, that our condemned practice in theſe ſtands juſtified, we hope with much aſſurance, we ſhall be acquited in the ſight of God, and in the conſciences of all that have any feeling and ſenſe of true Religion; the cenſures and talkings of others againſt us (which do not alittle afflict us, for the ſad conſequences thereof to themſelves) ſhall not much move us.

Therefore *firſt*, the Miniſtery of the Goſpel being, by poſitive inſtitution and appointment from Chriſt Jeſus, as Head and King of his Church; and the perſons qualified for, and called thereto, in his own way, without dependance on the Powers of the earth, being thereby conſtitute his Ambaſſadors and meſſengers, and in ſpecial delegation ſent from him as ſuch, to preach the Goſpel, to treat with ſinners for reconciliation, and obedience; they by vertue of this inſtitution, and their ſpecial delegation or miſſion from him, are bound to exerciſe the Miniſtery & office, they are inveſted with, till it be taken from them in the way, by which he coveyed and conferred the ſame upon them. If this be a truth (as no Chriſtian that doth acknowledge the divine autho-

rity of the holy Scriptures, and subjecte themselves to its light and direction, will get refused) will it not follow that Ministers; in their ministerial capacity, are first and immediatly subject to Christ, and not to men, in their ministrations of the Gospel? for they as his Ambassadours, having and derveing all their power from him, are oblidged on higheſt paines, by reason of their special relation to him, and their commission from him, (which containes all their instructions) to do the work of the Ministery, & cannot be superseded therein by any, far less by them, that acknowledge Christs authority, in and over the Church, to be superior to, and above all other authorities whatsoever. If they had their power and mission from men, well might they submit to these, in taking it from them; but it not being so, they cannot think themselves discharged of their office, but in the way, by which He conferred the same upon them. Beleeve us, in this lyeth a great part of our difficulty: we are sure, Ministers are Christs messengers, sent by him, whom they are bound to serve, in preaching of the Gospel and dispensing of ordinances, for the salvation of sinners, from which obligation none can loose them, but Christ Jesus, their only master and head in this work. (2.) It does also natively flow from the former truth, that all, especially those in and of the Church, are, by vertue of Christs supereminent, supream, and absolute authority, and their professed subjection to him, indispensibly bound to subject to the ministerial authority and its exercise, in the persons of those whom he sends, and that on the account of their ministerial power & office, which is truely Christs and not theirs;

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they acting according to the instructions contained in their commission: for they are Christs servants, serving him by special delegation in the Gospel, to which they are impowered, commissionated, and instructed by him; they bear his name, stand in his stead, and represent him to his people, as his Ambassadours, being sent by him to all sinners, for attaining and carrying on the great ends of the Gospel, their conversion, edification and eternal salvation And, seing it is so, we must first renunce Christs authority and dominon, over his Church, before we can refuse and reject that power and authority of the Ministers of the Gospel, who are thus sent by him to us: the truth is, the not receiving of them, is a rejecting of him; a matter that should be tenderly & seriously laid to heart by all; for it draws exceeding deep, upon all sorts of sinners high and low: so that they not depending on any other inferiour authority and power (except that by which they were sent) their obligation to the work of the Gospel cannot be annulled by men. Let us say it, in this we contend not meerly for the ministerial authority, (that for the fountaine and ends thereof should be dear to us) but for the prerogative of Jesus Chist, whose right it is, as King of his Church, to constitute & send Ambassadours in his own name; if there be any thing, that is the proper right of Soveraignity, this is one, which is the native consequent of it, without which it cannot be: shall we allow this in point of right to earthly Soveraigns, and deny it to Christ, the only Head and High priest of our holy profession?

Secondly, Moreover, Ministers in this relation

they ſtand under to Chriſt Jeſus, have the Goſpel & its ordinances committed & intruſted to them, to be diſpenſed in his name, for the converſion and edification of ſinners; for which they are called, the *ſtewards of the myſteries of God*, 1 Cor. 4: 1. this is a talent they have received from their great Lord and maſter, of which they muſt ſhortly give an account; and which, while they have it, they are commanded in all higheſt paines to uſe, for the gaining of ſinners to him, in the ways he directs them to in his word. Now let all judge, what a ſtrait Miniſters are caſt into, in theſe times: If they forbear on the inhibitions of men, to diſpenſe the Goſpel and its ordinances to ſinners, thus committed to them, they prove unfaithful to their maſter, betray their truſt, and incurre his heavy diſpleaſure and wrath: If they anſwer their truſt and aime at faithfulneſs therein, in preaching of the Goſpel, and labouring in the work thereof, to gaine ſinners, they provock men and expoſe themſelves to all ſorts of ſuffering. But they, knowing the love and terror of the Lord, have on mature conſideration of this mater, choſen and purpoſed, in their maſter's ſtrength, to venture on the wrath of men; ſeing they cannot, in this juncture, both pleaſe their Maſter & them; reſolveing to prefer the neceſſity of ſuffering, to that of ſinne, the much commended and cryed-up choiſe of *Moſes*, in the like caſe, propoſed to all in the word for their imitation.

Thirdly, Beſides this truſt of the Goſpel, there is likewiſe the heavy truſt of immortal ſouls (to whom they are ſent) committed to them, of whom they are to give an account, and for whoſe blood they muſt anſwer, when they reſigne and give up their

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ſtewardship, and lay down their office and truſt at his feet, from whom they received it. Do any think, the threats and inhibitions of men, will diſcharge them of this truſt at their maſter's hand? If they think ſo, they ſhall do well to produce ſomething from him, that will ſignify ſo much to them, without which they cannot judge themſelves exeemed from the care and overſight of ſouls; whoſe blood will cry aloud in the ears of their maſter, if they do not their part, in what he hath commanded them, for ſaveing of ſuch. We have heard of nothing yet from our Rulers to ſatisfy our conſciences in this mater, but peremptory lawes and acts, commanding them to obey the ſame, under great penalties: If we were aſſured upon clear rational grounds, that their voice and commands were the voice and commands of Chriſt Jeſus, releeving us of this preſſing burden of immortal ſouls, once laid on us, how quickly and cheerfully ſhould we obey their preſent laws: but nothing can we learne from them or any other, to aſcertane us of this. Let any, that hath any true feeling of the natural ſtate of ſouls, judge, what a cruelty it muſt be in us, to behold ſouls periſhing throw ignorance, wickedneſſe, hypocriſy & a Spirit of deluſion, in all parts of the Land, while we have the diſpenſation of the Goſpel committed to us, the mean that Chriſt hath appointed in his houſe, and uſeth to bleſs with power to the ſalvation of ſinners? Will not our neglect, in ſlighting of this, make us guilty of their blood, and acceſſory to their eternal perdition? We are aſſured of this from the word of God. While we reflect and think on this, we dar not, for fear of men and the ſufferings that threaten us from them,

them; ſtand by and look on, but labour, as we can in our miniſterial capacity, to prevent the ruine, we ſee coming on immortal ſoules, come of us what will.

If it be granted to us, that our obligation to obey God, in all he hath commanded us in his word, is antecedent and ſuperiour to the tyes on us for obedience to men; and that the commands of men should and ought to give place to the commands of God, (as we expect will not be denied by any, that intertaine the true notion of a God head, much leſſe by them that profeſſe ſubjection to the holy Scriptures, as the only rule of faith and obedience) then our practice cannot be condemned, but muſt be juſtified, which is but a neceſſare conſequence of this truth, ſo univerſally received and cloſed with by all men; (except thoſe who have debauched their conſciences, throw the predominant love of temporal things, to a ſlavish ſubjection to the luſts and ſinful commands of others) for are not Miniſters commanded to preach the Goſpel, and the people to hear it, to aſſemble and gather themſelves together for that end? How many are the commands and precepts of God to us in his word, about this mater? In a thing ſo clear and evident through the Scriptures, it is aſtonishing to us to think, that men profeſſing themſelves Chriſtians dare iſſue out commands, ſo directly oppoſite to the commands of God, and the obligation on Miniſters and Chriſtians to obey Him, before all others. We grant, when there is another duty on foot and called to, *hic & nunc*, the Magiſtrat may, yea ought to ſupercede the practice of that, that would hinder the duty, neceſſare and called to, for the time (to which in the circumſtantiat caſe there is an obligation and

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call antecedent to the Magistrats command:) but to lay on, and fix a stated cessation from the practice of commanded duties, on those, that are under an obligation of serving God, in the maters forbidden by men, is beyond the power of any; to do so, is to frame and state a war with God, and to fix our selves in opposition to him. Are not Ministers and Professors then in a pussling strait, who must either disobey God, or men? To them that ask us, why do we preach and hear, to the offending of our Rulers, and the causeing of so much trouble to the Country? Our answer is, God in his word hath commanded us so to do; they that sustean the relevancy of his reason, but yet deny the consequence, are obliged to give us something, that takes off our obligation of obedience to God, in these things, in our case; (sure we are they are commanded) but nothing can we meet with from the Scriptures of truth, to answer our arguments, and satisfy our consciences, but the cry of hazard from some, and sharpe severity from others.

Fifly, We hold according to the Scripture, that as the Magistrat cannot, *jure Magistratico*, exautorat the Ministers of the Gospel, or take their power and office from them; so he hath no power to untye the obligation on Ministers, and Professors, for obedience to God, in the least of his commands. It is a principle in politicks, held by all, that no inferiour power can disannul a power, or hinder its exercise, that is immediatly derived from, and dependant on a power superiour, except they show a warrant from the same: but in this matter it is so: we know all will grant, that Gods supream authority and dominion

is ſuperiour to and above all authorities and powers ſeing they derive the ſame from and hold them of him, who is truly *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*. And ſeing the Miniſterial power, as to its being and exerciſe, in the Church, is immediatly from God, throw his Son Chriſt Jeſus, by poſitive inſtitution and appointment in his word; no other power can exautorat theſe, that are cloathed with it, but they muſt shew a warrant for it from God in the Scriptures; there being no other way, by which God makes known his will to the ſons of men; if there be, let it be shown, and this will end the debait, and bring us to a quiet and cheirful ſubjection to the preſent laws, about the maters controverted. We meet with confident aſſertions, but no proofs without which, we cannot look on our ſelves, as looſed from the obligations lying on us, to uſe and exerciſe the Miniſterial power, by vertue of the inſtitutions and commands of God, given anent it in the word. We know the Miniſtery was inſtituted without a dependance on the Magiſtrat, and exercised in the Church, not only without, but againſt his will and command; and God was obeyed, while the Magiſtrat did countermand & oppoſe himſelf thereto, to his outmoſt; which ſayes, that Miniſters and profeſſors did not then dreame of a dependance on, and ſubjection to the Magiſtrat, in the Matters of God: The truth is, to give the Magiſtrat a power to diſſolve powers inſtitute by God, and to ſupercede our obedience to him, in the things he hath commanded, is to make him equal with, if not to exalt him above the Almighty God; the only Abſolute and Univerſal Soveraigne of all Creatures in he-

ven and in earth. Is not this to ſubſtitute the Magiſtrat, and to put him in the place of the *Pope*, that *Anti-chriſt*, the man of ſin, who in nothing ſo much, as in this, now under debat, exalted himſelf above all that is called God, or is worshiped, as is prophecied of him, 2 *Theſſ:* 2. 4? The conſequence of this uſurped power, now given to, and aſſumed by the Magiſtrat, in & over the houſe of God, is ſuch, that we tremble to think on that, which will (if things continue in this preſent courſe) be the iſſue of it. As we finde, in the accomplishment, that *Luther* did prophecy, in ſaying that there should ariſe a *Civil pope* in the Church, who should extend his power over the ſame, as far as ever the *Eccleſiaſtical Pope* had done; So we fear, that the troubles, tryals and perſecutions of the Church, shall come near to that hieght, they were at, under the *Pope* of *Rome*. This ſtrange inhanſing of things, divine and humane, ſpeaks ſome thing to fall out, that will make the preſent and ſucceeding generations to tremble; for God will not alwayes be mocked, nor ſuffer his Glory to be taken from Him.

Sixtly, When we conſider the ſinful and evil conſequences, that would of themſelves follow upon our obedience to the Magiſtrat, in the mater now controverted, we dar not, for all that is dear to us in this world, comply with what is required of us; nor deſiſt from ſerving of God in the Goſpel of his Son; for (1.) If the former reaſons, for our non-obedience, do hold and prove concludent, would not our obedience to what is enjoyned us, confirme the unjuſt uſurpations, made on the Church, and wreath the yoke of bondage about her neck, to

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the enslaveing of the consciences of all, and the los of her just rights and priviledges, purchased for, an granted to her, by Jesus Christ? As our comply ance would have made us accessorie to the Magistra sin, and brought us under the guilt of all the sin an wickedness, that hath ensued on the same; so w should not only have been cruel to the Church o God, and the souls of professors therein, but w should have brought the ruine of the Church o our own heads; for not only he that is active in an concurres with the causes of evils, is accessorie t all the bad and evil consequences of them; but als he that labours not in his capacitie and station to hin der them, when it is in his power to do: havin therefore nothing left us and within our reach, t with stand these usurpations and corruptions, unde which the Church now groans, and by which she i in hazard to be destroyed, but the Gospel of Christ that we find yet commited to us; we dar not giv over preaching and hearing of the same, which th Church in all ages hath found to be the power o God to her preservation, and recovery in evi times. (2.) While we think on the following ages and the obligations that are on us, for transmitin the Gospel to them, in its purity and power, (a our worthy predecessours did before us) & what ar the means and wayes, prescribed to us in the word for effecting of this great good; and with what suc cesse these have been essayed, in the former gene rations of the Church, to the benefite of succeedin times; we finde ourself straitly tyed, both again positive complyance with what is required of us and the omission of that, which God hath com

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manded, and put within our power, for resisting of these evils; which if yeelded to and not withstood, would bring our children, and theirs after them, into the darkness of ignorance, Idolatrie, superstition and prophannes, from which God in a great measure delivered us. We dar have no hand in the blood of our children, or those, that are comeing after us; which we know, the neglect of these means, that are appointed for propagating the Gospel, would bring upon us, and make us accessorie to. It is not unknown, what advance and progresse these times have made in the foresaid evils, since *Prelacy* reentered amongst us; and what furder length they would have gone, if it had not been for the obstruction, they have met with, from the Gospel preached, by a persecuted and despised Hand full, in whom the foolishnes of preaching hath been the wisdom and the power of God, to the salvation of this Church.

3). Although the solemne tyes, and obligations of the Covenants, under which these nations once came, be decryed, and all endeavours used, that are within the reach of these Lands, to disannul, disgrace, and make them void; yet finding, on the exactest search we have made, that they remaine in force on us, and this Church, either to the duties contained in them, or els to the Judgments and plagues denunced in the Word of God against Covenant breakers; we cannot to any thing that will bring us under so hainous and land-destroying sins, as Covenant breaking and perjurie; which we cannot evite, if either we comply with the corruptions, rejected by these Covenants out of this Church, or do not, in our stations and capacities, according to

our power actively withstand and oppose the same; and labour not for the preservation and advancement of the doctrine, worship and government of this Church, as it was at our taking on of these obligations; which binde us not only to Negatives, or non-complyances with the ejected corruptions; but to endeavour the preservation of these concerns, in our capacities, according to our power. Albeit this seem light to others, yet it is not so to us; for till the mater of these Covenants be disproved, from the Word of God, and made to appear to be unrighteous, antecedent to the Lawes of men, (which none hath yet done) we must judge our selves bound by them to the observation of all they containe, in this present case of the Church. We may not, so far as our knowledge leads us, have any hand in furdering, and advanceing of the ejected corruptions, whether in doctrine, worship or government; but must of necessitie, set ourselves, in our stations against them, left we be partakers of other mens sins, and consequently of the plagues, that God hath threatned in his word against them.

We shall consider next, some of these *exceptions* most commonly used against us, with which we are publickly and privately branded, and stigmatized for rendering us odious and hateful to all. *Exception.* 1. That we refuse to give that obedience to the Magistrat, his lawes, and commands, that under the paine of damnation, is enjoyned to all subjects, in the Word of God? *Answer.* Because this is the constant cry of our opposers, and given for the ground of these reproaches of disloyalty, rebellion & sedition, so unjustly cast upon us; we therefore more earnestly

earnestly beg of all, they'l weigh impartially the following *Answers*, in the ballances of truth and Justice.

First, As we chearfullie grant Magistracy to be the Ordinance of God, and by divine institution, to be immediatly derived from him; by vertue of which, all, especially Christians, are bound to subject themselvs to those cloathed therewith, and to obey them in all their lawful and just commands; so we complean of no little injustice done to us, by our adversaries, who for our non-obedience to the present lawes about *prelacy*, do charge us, with being enemies to Magistracy, and disloyal to them, that are now invested therewith; contrare to our known doctrine anent this mater, presented to the world, in our publict Confessions of faith, yet extant amongst us, and our constant practise conforme thereto. If simple non-obedience, in some particulars, that greive the conscience, be a sufficient ground for this charge, will not the Confessors and Martyrs, in all ages of the Church, be held guilty of disloyaltie and sedition, who, for not obeying of Magistrats, in their sinful commands, have suffered greivous and hard things? None can on this ground condemne us, but they will be found to justify the persecutors of the Saints, and to condemne them; if our reasons, for non-obedience in our case, were taken from the unlawfulness of authority, and our Rulers clame thereto, the charge were most just; but seing they are brought from the sinfulness of the mater commanded, while we acknowledge the authoritie, and grant obedience thereto in all other things, how malicious and unjust is the charge? Reproaches & lyes will be found another day a weak covering and an unsafe refuge.

Secondly, We suppose it will not be denyed to us, that the power of Magistrats is not simply absolute, but several ways bounded and limited; as. (1.) By its own nature, which is properly civil and politck. (2.) By its objects, Truth and Righteousnes, to which it is astricted, and beyond which, in its exercise, it cannot, *jure*, go. (3.) By the absolute and universal authority of God and his laws, from which it and other powers are derived, and to which they are subordinat. All these limites are set to Magistracy, which it may not transgres; and beyond which, obedience is not due to these, that are installed in it. By the *first* it is distinguished specifically from other powers, as immediatly fountained in, and descended from God, as it; as the power of Parents, of Husbands, Ministers of Christ, &c. some of which did exist and had being, before Magistracy was in the world. We assert that these powers, being specifically different from Magistracy, and as immediatly derived from God, the Magistrat cannot, *jure*, disannul them, hinder their exercise, nor dissolve the obligations on those vested therewith, to those duties to which they are antecedently bound. It is true, the magistrat hath a power about these powers; but it is only cumulative, and not privative of the same: he is to see, that all their duties in their several relations & capacities, and that Truth, Righteousnes, and Peace be keeped and flourish amongst them. By the *second* the Magistrat is bound up, and tyed to, truth and righteousnes, and hath no power to go beyond, far lesse to do contrare to them; they being the essential objects and ends of magistracy, for the preservation and

vancement of which, it was first institute & brought into the world. By the *third* the magistrat is so subjected to God and subordinated to him, (as all other powers are) that not only the right of precedency, in the mater of authority and obedience thereto, is Gods, and not the magistrats; but the magistrat is that much subjected to his law, as that he hath no *jus*, or power, to command any thing to the contrare: his commands here are nullities, as *a non habente Potestatem*: so that non-obedience in this case is not disobedience to him; but obedience to God: for as God hath not given power to any of his creatures against himself; so in the Collation of the magistratical power and authority, there is an obligation conveyed with it on the persons called thereto, to improve and use the same for him, and the furtherance of obedience from others to his laws; for the magistrats power being of God, makes him the Minister of God, for the good and not the hurt of others. Hence it is evident and beyond dispute, with all sober minded men, that the commands of the magistrat, do not binde any subject, where God commands the contrare. Court parasites and flatterers may extend the power of the magistrat, beyond these, who through the love of their worldly interests and lusts, (when favoured and advanced by Rulers) more then from any true respect to their just authority and prerogatives, keep no bounds in their assertions about the magistrats power; but the true markes, and Land marks are set by God himself, and will not be removed, but to the prejudice and ruine of these that labour to overturne them. If we make it not out, (as hath been hinted above) that, that which is

commanded is sinful, and contrare to the commands of the muſt high God, let us be uſed with all ſeverity; but noe are is granted to us, all acceſſe denyed, and every doore shut up.

Exception 2. But our adverſaries not finding ſufficient ground, for the former charge, take them to the actions, done in the times of our late troubles and confuſions, charging all that was then done upon our party and their principles. *Anſ.* We are confident that, when the carriage & actions of the true Presbyterian party, in relation to the Magiſtrat, shall be ſearched after, and known; they will be a ſufficient confutation of theſe malicious Calumnies cast upon us, from this head: we know, for juſtifying of this charge, all the enormous actions of former times are fathered on our party, and their principles; but contrare to all juſtice; for we are sure if the actions of the late preceeding times were duely differenced, and diſtinguished into their ſeveral kindes, & drawn up to their true ſountaines & heads, that theſe of them, that are not juſtifiable, shall be found to reſt on perſons and parties of deſignes, inclinations, and principles different from ours, who for worldly reſpects and deſignes, betook themſelves to, and sheltered under the wings of the Presbyterian party, while in power and ſucceſsful (as it uſeth alwayes to be in ſuch caſes:) of theſe there were different yea contrare ſorts, that winding into the favour of leading perſons in thoſe times, did climb up to that height of reputation and power, as to influence their counſels and actions, to the committing of ſeveral enormities, that we dar not, yea will not juſtify: but after-alterations gave ſufficient diſcovery

of them, who *Proteus lyke*, changing into every forme, ſtroke in with the party, that did for the time predomine: let preceeding actions then be diſtinguiſhed into thoſe, that we judge right and reſolve to ſtand to, as the native effects and product of our deſigns and principles (how much ſoever now miſrepreſented;) and theſe that were influenced and brought forth, by the predominency of perſons and parties of different deſigns and principles, in our counſels; and alſo betwixt thoſe, that were the actions of particular perſons, and not of the party; as likwiſe betwixt thoſe uſual infirmities, that men in this ſinful ſtate are incident to, in the beſt of actions, and thoſe groſſe and wicked aberrations from the paths of Righteouſneſs, that are but ſeldome incident to men of honeſt intentions, and well informed conſciences: we ſay, do us the juſtice, thus to difference former actings, while Presbytery was in the riſe, prevailing and proſperous againſt its adverſaries, and we will quickly wipe off the dirt caſt upon us by perſons, that keep no bounds of charity and juſtice, in their cenſures of the late times: let Hiſtories be conſulted (partial as they are) and it will quickly appear, what were the true genuine deſignes, and actions of our party then, and what not; but thus to charge the whole party & their principles, hand over head, with all the enormities of theſe times, lookes rather like a Spirit of bitter malice, then of meekneſs, ſobriety, and judicious love, that ſpeaks no evil, without clear rational grounds, the great ornament of the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity. Is it not known, and beyond all diſput evident, what the Presbyterians did in oppoſeing the change of go-

vernment, and all the sad practises committed before and after, in relation to it: so as the then prevailing party confided more, in the prelatick and cavilier party, then in the Presbyterian, finding them more truely averse from, and contrare to their designes and ways, then the other? But some alledge, that we did raise & put them in a capacity to do what they did? O how weak is this argueing? If it hold, the holy and righteous God will not escape the censures and imputations of thir men; all the wickedness and mischief done in this world will, by this *medium*, come upon him, as the cause and author of it; from whom they receive all that power, strength, and capacity, that enables them to do wickedly. Shall those that do good to others in educating, supplying, & affording them all necessaries, abused by them to sin and ryotous living, be judged the authors of their wickedness? O folly! If our intended brevity could suffer it, we would make it out from undeniable instances, that the government had not such sure & stedfast friends, as the Presbyterians, who were truely such, and acted according to their professed principles; who stood to it, when others (who are now the only favorits) turned their backs upon it, in going all the length of compliance with the Usurpers that was required; while the generality of true Presbyterians refused, for which they were discountenanced, and looked upon, as a party that was to be suppreſt. If persons that speak thus at randome against us, could, by clear *mediums*, knit the practises, they charge upon us, to our professed designs and principles, how would they triumph; but none of these have we yet seen and heard. We know, the

late wars are fathered on our party, as the first causers and beginners of it? But groundlesly, as will appear to any, that will be at the paines, to search out the true causes and grounds of them: we are confident that, as any, who is truely unbyassed, comes to the through knowledge of these; they will find our adversaries in the blame, and not our party, who for Religion, liberties, and self preservation, (for all was at the stake) were then forced to armes, throw the insatiable pride and tyranny of the then Prelats; but too much of this. Only we must say, if things now hold on in their present channel, in which they have run these few years past, we doubt not, but many will justify and allow, what once they condemned.

Exception 3. It is with no little confidence asserted by some, that although the Ministerial power be immediatly from Christ, by divine institution; yet, the exercise thereof is from the Magistrat, so that Ministers may not convocat the subjects, preach, and dispense ordinances, without liberty from him? *Ans.* (1) We desire to know, whence our adversaries have learned this distinction? Sure not from the word; there is not the least footing for it there; if it be, let it be produced. We know its original from whence it came, that man of sin, the *Pope* of *Rome* (from whose *Arsenal*, the *All* of the Hierarchy hath been brought, and this among the rest,) who for gaine, and fixing of an universal absolute dependance of all upon him; invented this distinction, that was unknown to the Christian world before he arose.

But, (2.) We assert, that the exercise of the

sterial power, is, as much immediatly from Christ, and independant on the Magistrat, as the power it self. *First*, because we finde this power was exercised in the Church, in the primitive times and afterwards, without any dependance on, and acknowledgment of the Magistrat anent the same: this none will get refused. We desire then to know, what it is, that now suspends the exercise of the Ministerial power on the Magistrat, that was not then? Christianity adds no new power or right to the Magistrat, it only qualifies and disposes him, to use his power aright; but gives none that he had not before: for if a heathenish Magistrat should exercise all that power about the Church and her pastours, that is by Scripture allowed to the Christian Magistrat, he should not exceed, nor go beyond the limits of the Magistratical power. As we finde several heathenish magistrats, in the Scriptures, doing a great part of the work ascribed to the Christian magistrat; (as *Cyrus*, *Darius*, *Artaxerxes*, &c.) so they are commended for it. It is to us ridiculous, to say, that the heathenish magistrats power is not *intensive & habitualiter* as great, as the Christian magistrats. 2. All moral power does necessarly include, and hath flowing from it, an obligation to its exercise, if moral and Physical impediments hinder not; it not only gives right to such and such acts, and makes them valide; but it binds the persons cloathed therewith to such acts, so that the omission of them in their season is their sin; for the end of the power tyes the person, that hath it, to intend and seek its accomplishment, in such and such wayes, as is proper to the nature of the power; as might be instanced, but in a mater so clear we forbear.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, How comes this distinction to be given and made use of, anent the ministerial power, and not anent others, about which the Magistrat may exercise his power also? may not Fathers, Husbands, &c. do the duties proper to their relations, without leave from the Magistrat? if they may, give us a reason why Ministers may not do the duties, proper and specifick to their function, without the magistrat? their power is as immediatly from Christ, and is as little dependent on the magistrat, yea and lesse, then theirs; never one hath undertaken this task, but they, who make the magistrat the fountaine of all power: which is most absurd; seing the magistrat did finde other powers existing and in being before he was.

Fourthly, As the power of ministers is from Christ by divine institution: so they are under an obligation, for its exercise, by divine commands, which the magistrat hath no power to imped, as hath been said. They that are cloathed with the ministerial office, are commanded to exercise it, who, in no place of Scripture, are directed to the magistrat, for his license; If they be, let us see it: no doubt we had heard of it, ere this time, if any such thing were.

Exception 4. There is one exception used against us among others, and urged with no little vehemency, in the matter of our loyaltie and obedience to Authoritie; to wit, our non-appearance before the Councel, on summonds given out against some of our number, at several occasions; which is held forth to be, and strongly aggravated for a high evidence of our contempt of our Rulers, and the authoritie wherewith they are cloathed: for which up wards of 80. of

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Gentlemen, Ladyes, Ministers and yeomens are intercommuned; and the subjects, under the same penaltyes due to such, inhibited all manner of assistance to, and converse with them. *Ans.* Not likeing to dip into, and discusse the severitie of this sentence of *intercommuning*, passed with such solemnity against us, nor yet to canvasse the legality or illegalitie of it; but leaving it to others, better versed in, and acquainted with our Lawes; we offer the following considerations to all, which we hope will, to the unbyassed, not only alleviat but justify our non-appearance. (1.) Beside what the law of nature hath provided and teaches all men, anent self preservation; we suppose, it will not be denyed, but granted to us by all, that, if many of the precepts and examples we have in the word of God, do allow flight to Ministers and Christians from the unjust violence and oppression of Rulers, when it is within their power to decline it; then our non-apperance before the Councel wil not necessarily inferre a contempt of their authority, or any true disloyaltie and disobedience to them: Otherwise Christ Jesus our blessed head, his Apostles and others, will be found as chargeable with this crime, as we; from which all Christians do free them. While we think on these precepts and examples of Christ, his Apostles and Christians, who lived in Scripture times, we cannot avoid these two conclusions, which in despite of all contradiction do make out the former inference, as 1. That passive obedience to the unrighteous decrees and punishments of Rulers, is as undue, as active obedience to their unjust commands: injustice in sentences and punishments, binds no more to submission

miſſion to theſe, then unrighteouſnes in commands yes to obedience, where the infliction of ſuch punishments is evitable; for Rulers are not enabled by their authority to injuſtrice more in the one, then they are in the other; and conſequently there can be no obligation on their ſubjects from their authoritie, to give themſelves up to their unjuſt punishments, more then to yeeld obedience to their iniquous commands: & if it were not ſo, Chriſt and his Apoſtles ſinned in not giving this obedience: which is moſt abſurd. *Obj.* 1. But this is contrarie to the doctrine of many Proteſtants, who teach that paſſive obedience is due, and ſhould be given, where active obedience is not? *Anſ.* 1. We know of no Proteſtants that teach ſo, except thoſe who were proſylited into court paraſites; it was neither the doctrine nor practice of moſt Proteſtants, as is clear from their writings and Hiſtory. 2. We deſire to know of them that thinke otherwiſe, what this allowed flight is. If it be not a removing of ourſelves (when the circumſtances of caſes permit) from the decrees and ſentences of Rulers, appointing us to unjuſt punishments: which is nothing, but a denying of paſſive obedience to ſuch ſentences. Who can evite this? Some there are who grant this, in ſentences that reach the life; but not in ſentences that only touch the body and eſtate, as impriſonments, fines, exile, &c. But give not any juſt inſtances, or ſound reaſon for what they aſſert. *Concl.* 2. Hence alſo we gather from the foreſaid precepts and examples, that non-ſubmiſſion to unjuſt ſentences, when within our power, is not inconſiſtent with that reſpect, eſteem, love, honour and obedience, which, by vertue of Gods commands

mands, we are bound to give to Rulers; and consequently is no contempt of their authority, nor any true disloyalty; els Christ in allowing himself, and his Apostles in practising this slight, had been contemners of authoritie and disloyal to it: which all Christians assert to be false. Hence it is evident, and will be so to the unprejudged, that if our Opposites fasten not this charge on the mater, they will never be able to do it from our non-appearance simply and abstractedly considered. *Obj.* 2. Our Rulers summonds being properly their commands to us. for our appearance before them, (which is lawful and in its self just) we were bound to have appeared, both on the account of their authority, and the thing commanded? *Ans.* This being the objection of greatest seeming strength, and most used to our reproach, we shall consider it a little, and (1.) Waveing the debate about the nature of summonds, and leaving their native import, use and consequences to Lawyers. We assert, that when the commands of Superiors (altho lawful in their immediat object or matter) are, in their stated designe, so connected with irreligion, injustice, oppression and unrighteousnes, that they become the engines and means of oppression and violence, or of any thing truely sinful in its self; we say such commands participat of the nature of their ends and become unjust: as for instance, when Rulers in order to oppression and persecution, command any subject to witness his knowledge of the Orthodox opinions and practises of such and such persons, the subject in this case ought not to obey such commands, which out of this case and the like, that are abstract from such sinful ends, he not only may, but ought

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to obey; or if a master or father should require his servant or son to bring to him such a woman to such a place, they knowing it is for commiting of uncleanes with her, they should not obey; which, when without respect to this wicked end, they are bound to do. If this were not a truth, the officers and souldiers, that apprehended Christ and Crucified him, were innocent and blamlesse: which all grant to be false, for it was the injustice of the ends of their lawful Rulers commands in this thing, that made their obedience to them undue and unjust, so that they were truely culpable and guilty of Christs blood, as well as their Rulers. (2.) Suppoſeing but not granting, the summones to be good & just in themselves; yet it is a Maxime agreed to by all Divines, that where two things morally good, doe tryst in Christians practice, the one of one or two degrees of goodnes, the other of three or foure, that the last should be chosen and preferred to the first: but so it fell out to be in our case. To our thoughts on this matter, it was beyond question, that our non-appearance at these times, to which we were cited, was a greater good (supponing the other to be good, which we do not yeeld) both to the Magistrat, our selves and others, then our appearance could have been; for thereby the Magistrat was withheld from unjust oppression, he should have been guilty of, the Gospel preserved with the people in its purity, much suffering to others prevented &c. while we had no good to expect from our appearance, but a meer act of obedience. (3.) That non-obedience, in some cases and things, to the commands of Rulers, is no true disobedience, as (t.) In things without the Magistrats line and reach, altho

altho the things commanded be just and good in themselves: suppone the Magistrat should command a person unordained, to preach the Gospel, dispense the Sacraments, &c. this being beyond the Magistrats line, it were no disobedience in any subject, not to obey such commands. (2.) In things contraire to mercy and justice, that one Subject oweth to another, if the Magistrat command either the not doing of these, or the doing of the contrare; not obeying here, is no disobedience. The truth is, if the mater commanded be not just, and, antecedent to the Magistrats commands, not necessare; not obeying is no disobedience; and the reason is, becaus no power can justly crave obedience, when it acts either beyond, or against its true adequat formal object: but of this above. (3.) When Magistrats commands are opposite to Gods, (which hath often fallen out) obedience to God can be no disobedience to the Magistrat. But in our case we undertake to prove, that altho the thing commanded, to wit, appearance, be within the compasse of the Magistrats power, that it was contrare to mercy and justice; yea and things commanded and allowed us of God: which will exeem our non-appearance from disobedience, & consequently from contempt of Authority.

Knowing and being morally certaine, that the unjust violence, designed against us, would have inevitably followed on our appearance, we chused rather to forbear it, and to use the flight Christ allowes to his servants and people, in the like cases. It is a Maxime in Morals or practical divinty, accorded to by all Divines, that of two penal evils, when the election of them is in our arbitriment, the lesser is

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to be preferred to the greater: And to any that consider the case, we then had before us, it will be manifest, that flight was much preferable to the severity, we were to expect on appearance; of which we were assured, not only from the standing lawes of the Kingdome, but likwise from the preceeding carriage of our Rulers; who, altho slow and negligent enough in the execution of the lawes against *Papists*, *Quakers*, and other heterodox opinious and wicked practises; yet punctual and strick in puting the law to more then its full execution against us, to which they have been, and are instigated by our enemies, the Prelats, to such a hight of keenness, that if the mater contained in our summonds cannot be made to appear, we are put to answer such interrogatories, and required to give and subscribe such oaths, engadgments and bonds, to which, they know, we cannot without destroying of our principles yeeld; for refuseing of which, many of our party have been cast into prisons, fined, banished, &c.

Thirdly, It had no little influence on us in determining our non-appearance, that the usual legal forme of procedour in judgment, allowed to and used with others, is not observed towards us; from which we could not expect justice, but all severity. On our appearance we have no accuser, often no lybel condescending on, or containing our crimes, with the circumstances; no witnesses produced; but an oath administred to the empannelled, for expiscating of accusations against ourselves and others, and that in crimes made by law capital; and the oaths of these, whom the law calls, *socij criminis*, sustained for valid probation; wayes of procedour condemned

by the law of God and nations, except where the Papists cruelty takes place. And if all these fail, the subscribing of engagments and bonds is p opoſed & required (as is said above;) on the refusal of which, a prison is the best we meet with. Let any man of ordinare reason and justice judge, whether appearance before Rulers, who, by following of such methods and wayes in judgment, declare themselves resolved to have ae the persons arraigned, whether *jure* or not; we say, let any judge, whether appearance before such, when it is in their choise to appear or not, be rational and safe; except where the supposed guilty intends by their appearance, to prevent greater severity.

Fourthly, Among other things, that came under consideration with us against this appearance, was the oath *de super inquirendis*, lately framed into a law and now pressed on us, which (for the reasons formerly given) we dar not take; for besids the severe punishments (as imprisonment, arbitrary fines, exile to forraigne plantations, &c.) we were to look for for refuseing of this oath; if we take it, we are contrare to all natural equity, mercy and justice, made the accusers of ourselves and others, contrare to the provision made in the act establishing and imposeing of this oath, which declares that the oath taken by any shall not militat in judgment against the takers of it to such & such penalties therein specified, and yet the mater of their lybel useth to be drawn from it, and if they deny their deposition, an oath is adduced for probation against them: And it is not intelligible by us, how such an oath can be sustained for valide probation against others, and not against the

the deponent; seing a person's own confession of his crimes is judged sufficient against him, much more should this oath, which necessarly suppons and infers confession, even judicial.

But *Fiftly*, In the next place, the evil consequences, that by our appearance, we were certane, would have redounded to many, made us forbear it; for if we had appeared, we were sure perpetual imprisonment, or exile from our native countrey, had ensued thereon; whereby we should have been put out of a capacity, for labouring the preservation and advancement of the Gospel in this Church, of which we are members, and to which we, as Ministers and Christians, are so straitly tyed and bound; the people should have been robbed of a faithfull Ministery, and the benefite of the word purely dispensed by them; the rod of persecution, now on the back of this Church, should have been more sharpened against the remnant of our party; the people exposed to more shakeing and winnowing temptations, to the endangering of their stedfastnes; our adversaries of all sortes more emboldened to vent & spew out their venemous doctrines, and to carry on their designed defection to a greater hight: all which being more then probable, yea to us morally certane, we durst not do that, which would have opened the door to all these evils. These arguments do suppone, and lean on the unjust oppression, intended and prosecuted against us, which is made out both as to mater & designe, in the precedent and subsequent discourse.

Sixtly, It was never a piece of disloyalty and disobedience to Magistracy even for persons confessedly guilty, to keep themselves from the stroke of the law,

to run away from it, and to escape out of prisons, if they could effect it, and consequently not to enter into prisons, when cited thereto, must be as free of disloyalty, especially when the cause, for which any is in hazard thereof, is righteousness, as ours is at this day.

SECT. IV.

Our practice cleared from separation; where it is also proved unlawful, to submit to the Ministry of the Curats.

Exception 5. The ejected Ministers preaching, & dispensing of ordinances, and peoples runing to, and hearing of them, in this manner, and withdrawing from communion with the Church, in the allowed publick ordinances, is separation; which is against the principles and practises of the Presbyterians in foregoing times? *Ans.* because this, in acts of Parliament, publict Sermons, and in Pamphlets, is with great confidence asserted; we shall take it a little into consideration; and see whether the Prelats and their Creatures; or our Ministers and the people adhering to them, be the separatists: A sinful separation, we grant, there is, but who are the Causers of it, and guilty thereof, before God they or we, let our following answers and reason determine, to which, that they may be more clearly apprehended, we premise. 1. That it is not every sort of separation, that is sinful and evil; some kinds of it are duty and commanded, as our Protestant divines make good against the *Papists*, as *Joseph Hall* and all that writ on that subject: for it is our part

to separat from sin, and Professors joyning together in it, with which the worship of God comes too often to be vitiated, and polluted: for this we have many precepts and commands in the word *Ephes.* 5: 11. with other Scriptures. 2. To make non-presence, or absence from the meetings of Christians for worship and goverment, sinful separation, there must be *first* a stated habitual absence, *secondly* Such reasons and grounds for it, as will not justify it; for if the absence be not ordinare, it is not esteemed separation; altho the reasons of it be not justifiable *pro hic & nunc*: and albeit the absence be ordinare and habitual, yet if its causes, whether moral or physical, be right and warrantable, it is not sinful separation; for absence from the meetings of Christians in worship or government, is either sinful or not, according to the causes or reasons of it. 3. The grounds that will justify and warrant a withdrawing, in ordinare, from such meetings, must be. (1.) The want of a just authority or right, in those that dispense the ordinances of worship and government: The *Pharisees* question proposed to Christ, Matth. 21: 23. did suppone a commonly granted, and received truth, which Christ does not deny, but tacitly yeelds; that they who act publickly in the Church must have a just authority & right so to do: we ought to have some rational convincing evidence of this, & if it be wanting, it will warrant this withdrawing; much more, if its want be positively clear. (2.) Corruptions in the worship of God, so knit to them in their use, that they cannot be used without the use of these corruptions, will also allow a withdrawing from such meetings; as all *in thesi* grant. (3.) Sinful cir-

cumstances, as such places, times, causes, persons &c. That in their connexion with, and respects to things, that are truely sinful and evil, becomes so, *probic & nunc*; as fasts, thanksgivings, &c. when observed at such times, and for such Causes, as are evil. (4.) Unsound and heretical doctrine, taught in ordinare, in such meetings, Matth. 24. We grant it is not every error and erronious doctrine, that will justifie a peoples withdrawing from ordinances, dispensed in the assemblies of the Church, (there being nothing besides that may justly cause it;) but only such as is truely heretical and subversive of the foundations of Religion, Righteousnes, & peace. When poison is adminittred in stead of wholesome food, a people are bound to see to their own safety, that they be not destroyed by that, which was intended for their health. (5) There are some things in the stated case of some times, and other circumstances, that will give sufficient ground for this withdrawing, that will not do it at other times; as in the beginnings of defection, under the contests betwixt the orthodox and unsound party, usually some things fall in, that will call for a secession from Church assemblies; which have often fallen out in the Church, and is evident from history; particularly in the time of the *Arminians*, predomining in the Church of *Holland*; and many others that are to be seen in the records of the Church. 4. Although in some cases, a negative separation be lawful and right, where a positive is not; yet in some cases, a positive separation is lawful and duty: it is hard to determine of cases in this matter, except where the case hath been, or els is existent: there are two cases

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in which this is allowed; intruſion, and an univerſal infection of the worship and government of the Church, with ſuperſtition, idolatry and tyranny, to the polluting of all its ordinances: we hope there will be no controverſy anent the ſecond, ſeing it is the doctrine, and hath been the practice, of the reformed Churches, in their ſeceſſion and departur from the Church of *Rome*, on that very head; who not only withdrew from the communion of that idolatrous Church; but erected themſelves into diſtinct Churches, with officers and ordinances, conforme to the commands and inſtitution of Chriſt: and when the mater is ſeriouſly and impartially weighted, there will be found, as little ground of controverſy about the firſt; anent which we take theſe two to be evident truths. (1.) That Churches are not bound to ſubject to, but to withdraw from theſe intruded upon them; partly becauſe the juſt rights of the Church are wronged and taken from her, which all ought to maintaine, and not to quite; & partly becauſe she is enſlaved thereby, and ſubjected to the luſts & tyranny of men, and a preparative laid downe to others for doing of the like, in times coming. (2.) That this intruſion is either on Churches that have bin and are ſetled in Chriſts way, with able and faithful Miniſters; or elſe on theſe that want & are vacant for the time: If it be on Churches that are under the ſetled inſpection of faithful Miniſters, they are bound to adhere to theſe, and not to give place to the intruders, from whom to withdraw, can be no ſinful ſeparation; the intruders, and theſe that fall off to them, are the ſeparatiſts: if the Church or Churches be without faithful Miniſters, they alſo

are obleidged to refuse the intruding Ministers; and if this unjust and violent intrusion on them continue, they are obliged to provide themselves of Ministers, that under their oversight, they may have and enjoy the benefite of the Gospel and its ordinances, to which by the commands of Christ, and the necessity of the means of eternal life, they are straitly bound; for as unjust intrusion brings nothing with it, to make a people yeeld to the intruders; so it untys no obligation formerly on them, for endeavouring of their settlment with a faithful Ministery. If we thought these, *in thesi*, were questioned by any, we could with great ease make them out to the conviction of all; but taking them for granted, we surcease any further probation. Therefore 3. We desire, it may be also considered, that there is a vast difference betwixt hearing of, and submiting to Ministers, in the exercise of their Ministery, in the general; and doing of these to such and such Ministers: the question betwixt us and our adversaries, is not whether we should hear and submit to Ministers in their Ministery, for this we do not deny; but whether we should hear and submit to these, that were our Ministers & set over us bythe Holy Ghost, before this change in the Church; or these sent from and thrust in upon us, by the Magistrat and Prelates? It is no little wrong done us by our enemies, who give it out to the world, that we contemne a Ministery & ordinances and are against hearing; while our practice, declares the contrare to all, and for which we are dayly suffering. We hold that, as it is our duty to withdraw from, and not to subject to the Prelates, and their Creaturs; so it is likwise our duty, to cleave

cleave to our former Miniſters, in hearing of the Goſpel, and receiveing of ordinances from them, as we can, & have acceſs: we have given reaſons for the affirmative, & ſhall, the Lord willing, do the like for the negative. 6. It would alſo be adverted, that there is a great difference, betwixt a Churches bringing in, and carrying on of a defection willingly, in a Church way; and the Magiſtrats doing this of himſelf, without the Church, yea forcibly, *Eccleſia renitente ac reclamante*; although there ſhould be no difference, as to the mater; yet there is much as to the maner and way, to influence, regulat and diverſifie miniſters and Chriſtians carriage under them: all in the Church are to ſubject to the power, proper and peculiar to her, which they ought not to do to others, uſurping this power, and taking it out of her hands. 7. In this mater a difference or diſtinction is to be made, betwixt the perſonal ſcandals and corruptions in miniſters walk, and adminiſtration of holy things; and theſe that may be, or are found in the way of their entry, which may be ſuch, that although they do not invalidate their miniſterie, in their diſpenſing of the word and its ordinances, to the rendering of theſe nullities; yet may give ſufficient ground to peoples withdrawing from and not ſubjecting to them, as their lawful and ſent paſtours. 8. There is a great difference betwixt a Church regularly conſtitute according to the Word of God, in her miniſterial political being, enjoying the exerciſe of all ordinances in purity, that comes afterwards, while under that conſtitution, to be intruded upon by the ſole power of the Magiſtrat, and perſecuted in officers and members for adhereing to her

constitution, in opposition to the intruders, and the corruptions brought in upon her by them, against her consent; and a Church declining from her former purity, in doctrine, worship and government, abuseing her power to the bringing in and furthering of the said defection, and universally concurred with, and submited to in the same. The first is our case, & concerns the state of the question betwixt us and our opposites, in the charge of separation they lay on us.

The question then betwixt us, and our adversaries, is not whether we may lawfully separat from publict ordinances, for the corruptions and personal miscarriages of fellow-worshipers, whether ministers or others; as one in a little *manuscript* doeth maliciously or ignorantly state it: we are still of the same minde with our worthy predecessours in their debats against the *Brownists* and *Separatists*; as our practice this day doeth confirme, in our assemblies and meetings for worship, differing in nothing, as to this, from what it was before. Neither is it, whether it be simply or in it self sinful, to hear & receive ordinances from these, who have entered by, & submitted to the *prelates*, abstract from our present case; for we grant the case may be, in which it is lawful yea duty to hear, and receive ordinances from such; yea and hath been. But the true state of the question, is, whether a Church or Churches constitute according to the rules of the word, provided and settled with ministers, regularly called and submited to, should yeeld to the Magistrats and Prelates, violently ejecting their ministers, and thrusting in other ministers upon her, not only without, but against her consent; in subjecting to such, hearing

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and receiving of ordinances from them; while the Magistrat does all this, for furthering and perfecting a course of defection, contrare to solemne Covenants and oaths, by which they were oftener then once, ejected and cast out of this Church? To this we *answer* negatively; that the Church should not subject to such in hearing, and receiving of ordinances from them, but ought to disowne, and withdraw from these, thus entered into the Church, and complying with the introduced corruptions.

This conclusion we prove thus. *First*, They who have no just authority, nor right to officiat fixedly in this Church, as the proper pastores of it, ought not to be received, but withdrawne from: But the Prelates and their adherents, the *Curates*, have no just authority nor right to officiat in this Church, as her proper pastours: Therefore they ought not to be received but withdrawne from. It is expected, they will not deny the *first proposition*: all the debate will be about the *second*, which we make out thus. They who have entered into, and do officiat fixedly in this Church, without her authority and consent, have no just authority and right so to do: but the Prelates and their Curats have entered into this Church, and do officiat therein, without her authority and consent; therefore they have not just authority, &c. The *first proposition* is clear, and we suppose will not be gainsaid by our Antagonists; seing the power of mission, of calling and sending of ordinare fixed pastours, is only in the Church, and not in any other, as all Divines do assert. The *Second* is evident from maters of fact: for there was no Church judicatory called or convocated, for bringing of the Prelats into this

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Church; all was done immediatly by the King & acts of Parliament, without the Church (she being by violence disenabled to meet in her officers for fear of opposition from them;) a practice wanting a precedent in this and (for any thing we know) in all other Churches. *Object.* 1. But our Prelats were consecrat by the Prelats of the Church of *England*? *Ans.* What signifies that to the Church of *Scotland*, and their just right to officiat in her (suppone the office of prelacie were right and institute?) Does any think, the Church of *England* would acknowledge the authority of Prelats consecrat here, and subject to the same, if all were done not only without but against her consent; we suppose not. Either the Church of *Scotland*, at that time, had no power of mission, or els she had; if she had none, wanting prelacy, then our Ministers were no Ministers of Christ Jesus, and all ordinances dispensed in her for many years were nullities; which some of our adversaries, we hope, will not say: if she had the power of mission, how came she to be neglected and usurped upon by another Church, to whom she was not subordinat? *Object.* 2. But Presbyters cannot consecrat Bishops, they being an inferior order. *Ans.* if it could be shown from Scripture, that Bishops are not only an Order and office different from Presbyters; but that they have a different ordination to their office, from that of Presbyters, it would say much; but nothing of this can be made to appear from the Word of God. But. 2. We ask whether consecration be different from ordination? If it be one with the same, why may not Presbyters consecrat? and if they may ordaine (as we undertake to

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make out from Scripture and Antiquitie) what neceſſitie was there for going to *England* for it, ſeing it might have been done by the Presbyters of this Church? If conſecration differ from ordination, ſure it is a humane cuſtome and invention, for which we have nothing in the Scriptures and pure Antiquity, that only ſpeaks of ordination, the only way, in which all Paſtors entered into the paſtoral office. 3. The truth is, as a Church Miniſterial and politick, conſtitute according to the Word of God, with all officers of divine appointment, hath the full power of the keys of the kingdome of God; ſo there is no ſort of officer, neceſſare by divine inſtitution to her edification, but ſhe is enabled, to furniſh her ſelf with ſuch, without a neceſſitie of ſeeking to other Churches for them: and if it be ſo, the Preſbyters of this Church, being her repreſentatives, their conſent ſhould have been had. Although we had no juſt exception againſt the office of the Prelates, as it is conſtitute and declared by law (as we have) but their violent intruſion in this Church, it puts a ſufficient bar on our ſubjection to them, ſo that we may not, yea cannot owne them as the lawful paſtors of this Church. *Obj.* 3. The Magiſtrat conſented to and procured their conſecration? *Anſ.* If any will make it appear, that the Magiſtrat is the Church (as *Eraſtus* does inſolently aſſert without all probation) yea a member of it, as ſuch, or hath the power of miſſion, we ſhall yeeld the cauſe and quietly ſubmit: but when we ſearch into the Scripture, we find the Magiſtrat, as a Profeſſor of Chriſtianity a member of the Church without all Church power (let be to be the fountaine of it) and ſubjected

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as such to the care and oversight of Church Officers; in the exercise of their ministerial authority and power. We grant, it is his part to put the Ministers of the Church (when negligent in furnishing of her with officers) to their duty anent it; but not to thrust in officers upon her of himself without her consent. *Obj.* 4. But the Curats have entered by the Church? *Ans.* 1. This we deny: the contrare is clear from constant practice; for the Curats come in upon congregations only by the Bishop and Patron, who are not the Church, nor have any power from her for what they do, in this: all their right and power is founded upon, and derived from the supremacy, and acts of Parliament, and not from the Church; in which the Bishop acts as the Kings delegat and substitute, only impowered thereto by his law: so that the Curats having and deriving all their power from the Prelates, cannot have the same from the Church; none gives what he hath not. Buc. 2. The prelates, not being the lawful governing Church, any that enter congregations by them, cannot be said to enter by the Church; no more then if a Minister should enter into a congregation of this Church by a Minister or Ministers of the Church of *France*, or *Holland*, without the Ministers of this Church, can be said to enter by the Church here; for the Ministers of other Churches are not the governing Church of this Church. The antecedent is to us clear; for as the Prelates have entered without the Church; so the lawful Ministerial ruling Church, although scattered and persecuted, is yet existent and in being, who by the unjust and violent intrusion of others, have not lost their right of ruleing this Church; but

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in point of right and obligation do continue to be her lawful pastours; for violence, persecution and intrusion, do not dissolve the relation betwixt the Church and her Pastours, either general or particular; there being nothing in our case, that can justly do it; other wayes, it should be in the power of the Magistrat, to undo and destroy the political Ministerial Church, both formally and effectively which is absurd. We ask at any, who think persecution and intrusion do in our case annul the pastoral relation betwixt Ministers and Churches; whether the Magistrats violent ejecting of Ministers, and puting of *Mahumetan* or *Popish Priests* in their roomes, will discharge Ministers and Congregations of their obligations to one another? if they think not, then how can these untye their obligations, in our case? We ask a reason. If they judge persecution and intrusion by the Magistrat in this case, to have this effect; then it will inevitably follow, that the Magistrat can destroy divine commands flowing there from, contrare to the practice of divine relations, & obligations to the obedience of the Church, in the primitive times, who, notwithstanding of the Magistrats Edicts, threatnings, & much actual violence, performed the mutual duties of pastours and flocks.

Arg. 2. All power of the Prelates and their creatures in the Church is by law fountained in and derived from the Magistrat, and in its exercise subordinated to him; (as is evident from the *act of restitution. Parl. Carol.* 2. 1. *Sess.* 2. *Act.* 1.) which derivation and subordination they owne and homologat, by their compliance with what the law does require, in order to it: therefore such we cannot, we may not owne;

owne, receive and subject to, as our ministers under Christ they acknowledge & subject themselves in their ministery to another head, then Christ Jesus, which by law is set in and over this Church. That the force of this Argument may be more perspicuous and clear, we shall put it into forme thus: Those that receive and derive their Church power from, and are subordinat in its exercise to another head, then Christ Jesus, should not be received and subjected to, as the ministers of Christ in his Church: But the Prelats and their Curats do receive, and derive their Church power from, and are subordinat, in its exercise, to another head then Christ Jesus: therefore they ought not to be received and subjected to, as the ministers of Christ in his Church. We suppose the *first propositon* will not be denyed; all the debate will be in the *Second*, Which we prove thus; These officers in the Church professing themselves such, that derive their Church power from, and are subordinat, in its exercise, to a power truely Architectonick and supream in the Church, beside Christ, doe derive their power from and are subordinat in its exercise to another head, then Christ Jesus; But so it is, that the Prelates and their creaturs, do derive their Church power from, and are subordinat in its exercise to a power truely Architectonick and supream in the Church, beside Christ; therefore the Prelates and their Curates do derive their power from, and are subordinat in its exercise to another head, then Christ. The *major propositon* is evident: for whoever hath a supream Architectonick power, in and over the Church, must be an head to the same, and the fountaine of all Church power: it is a repug-

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nancy to be ſupream, & have an Architectonick power, and not to be the head of that Society, to which any is ſuch. Now to the *Minor*, that the Prelats and their Curats have their power from, and in its exerciſe are ſubjected to a ſupream Architectonick power, is beyond diſput clear, from the *act of reſtitution*, formerly mentioned, and other acts to be mentioned afterwards; and will be ſo to any that conſidera tly peruſe the ſame; of which we are to ſpeak at more large, under the laſt head; but for the time, we propoſe theſe three from theſe acts, for making out of this argument. 1. They are expreſly made to have a dependance upon and ſubordination to the King, as ſupream to them, in their Church judicatories and adminiſtrations. 2. The government of the Church, in its ordering and diſpoſeing, is annexed to the crowne, as one royal prerogative thereof, which not only ſuppons the government to be in him, as the fountaine thereof, but to be exerciſed with that dominion, that is ſuteable to his regality. 3. The giving of Church power to Church officers, is ſupponed to be the effect and deed of his lawes, and acts, without which, all power in the Church is declared to be null and void. *Objec.* Although the Kings Majeſty be ſupream governour in all cauſes, and over all perſons Eccleſiaſtical; yet he is not head to and of the Church? *Anſ.* If he be ſupream governour in ſuch cauſes and over ſuch perſons, *in Linea directa*, no queſtion, he is the head political to the Church; for *GOVERNOUR & HEAD* are equipollent terms: whoſoever is ſupream Governour to any ſociety, in this ſenſe, is a proper political head to it; it is needleſs to quarrel about words, if the thing be granted. And

that this subordination or supremacy is direct, or *in Linea directa*, is, we judge, clear from the fore mentioned acts, seing they not only make the King the fountaine of Church power; but moreover in the *act anent the the National Synod*, he is made the *All* of the same, and without him, it is nothing. The like of these, the sun never shined on, except these made by King *Henry* the 8. of *England*; which being scrupuled at by all sorts of persons, at home & abroad, they were, in Queen *Elizabeths* time, forced to alleviat the matter by removeing the title *head*, and some mitigating explications allowed, and ordered to be given to the subjects, at the taking of the oath of supremacy; but no such explications allowed here.

Arg. 3. If the Ministers and Churches required by law to receive and submit to the Prelats, and their Curats thus thrust in upon them, were constitut and setled in Christs way, as Pastors and flocks, in the just possession and actual use of all ordinances, conforme to the rules of the word; then it is no sinful separation, for Churches, in adhering to their Ministers, not to receive nor submit to the Prelates and their Curats: But so it is, that the Ministers and Churches required by law to receive and submit to the Prelats and their Curats, thus thrust in upon them, were constitut and setled, in Christs way, as Pastors and flocks, in the just possession and actual exercise of all ordinances, conforme to the rules of the word: Therefore it is no sinful separation on their part, not to receive and submit to the Prelats and their Curats, in hearing and receiving of ordinances from them. We suppose, the *consequence* of the *major proposition* is evident, and will not readily be

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denyed by any; and if it shall happen to be, we prove it thus. If there be divine obligations on Ministers and their Churches to the performance of the mutual duties of Pastors and flocks; then it can be no sinful separation, for Churches, in adhering to their Ministers, not to receive nor submit to the Prelats and their Curats; But so it is, that the Ministers and Churches, required by law to receive and submit to the Prelats and their Curats, were under divine obligations to the performance of the mutual duties of Pastors and flocks: Therefore it is no sinful separation for Churches not to receive nor submit to the Prelats and their Curats. The *consequence* of the *major proposition* leaneth upon these two, and is infallibly made out by them, *first* that there is a divine relation of Pastor and flock, betwixt Ministers and the Churches, over whom they are set; and *secondly* that they are bound by divine commands, to do the mutual duties of such, contained and prescribed in the word of God: none that acknowledge the Ministery to be an ordinance of divine institution, and the Scriptures to be the rule of religion and righteousness, will be able to refuse these. We conceive none, even of our Antagonists, will deny the *Minor*; if they do, will it not follow that the Church of *Scotland*, before and at the Prelats introduction, was no Ministerial political Church? which is false; as we undertake to prove; when ever our opposites give their reasons to the contrare. But we know the greatest debate will be about the *Minor proposition* of the first argument, to wit, that Ministers and Churches, required by law to receive and submit to the Prelats and their Curates, were setled in Christs way

as Paſtors and flocks, in the juſt poſſeſſion, & actual exerciſe of all ordinances of divine appointment. This for mater of fact is beyond all denial, for the Churches of Chriſt in *Scotland*, before and at the Prelates late entry among us, in the Year 1662. were, for the generality of them, furniſhed with Paſtors, and in the poſſeſſion of all ordinances; The debate then will run upon the *jus* of that conſtitution, that was exiſtent and in being at the Prelats introduction: againſt which there is nothing, that can with any colour of reaſon be objected, but one of theſe three: *Obj.* 1. Prelacy was wanting in that conſtitution, which it ſhould have had? *Anſ.* 1. To the validity of this objection, it muſt firſt be made out, that Prelacy, as it is eſtabliſhed by law, and in uſe and exerciſe, among us, at this day, is of divine right, or an office inſtitute in the word of God; which is not yet done, and for any thing we have yet ſeen, never will. Let our adverſaries in this great debate conſider the reaſons and exceptions we have given againſt it, and anſwer them: yea, we undertake to prove, that it is not only without, but againſt the word of God. 2. We ask at the Patrons of Prelacy, whether they judge it eſſential to the conſtitution of the Miniſterial political Church? If they judge it eſſential, doth it not neceſſarily follow, that all the Reformed Churches of *France*, *Holland*, &c. are no miniſterial Political Churches; and that all ordinances diſpenſed in them are Nullities; yea that the Churches of the *vallyes* of *Piemont*, called the *Albigenſes*, (which by all hiſtorians have their original deduced from the Apoſtles,) were not ſuch, ſeing in the confeſſion of all, they never had Prelacy from

their begining of Christianity to this day; which is contrare to the sense and judgment of our Worthy Reformers, who alwayes esteemed them pure Churches. The truth is, the consequence is so necessare, that the most of the Prelatical party of the Church of *England*, admit no Minister of the reformed Churches to officiat among them without reordination; by which they fix a desperat Schisme between them and these Churches, while they desire and endeavour reconciliation with *Rome*: which speaks out the tendency of their principles? If they think Prelacy not essential to the Political Ministerial Church? (as some of them do grant?) then our Church constitution, as to all essentials, was right, our Pastores bound to feed, and people to submit, hear and receive ordinances from them; *Obj.* Although Prelacy be not essential to the *esse*; yet it is usful and necessare to the well being of the Ministerial Church? *Anſ.* 1. As hath been said above, we know of no good, to which Prelacy is said to be necessare, that is not easily atrainable without it; yea and is not win at in the reformed Churches. 2. Then the former obligation on our Pastores and this Church must continue; for if Prelacy be not essential nor necessare to the being of the Ministerial Churches, the obligation, which flowes from, and is dependant on it, cannot be discontinued by the introduction of Prelacy upon us; it should rather confirme and strengthen this obligation, in the opinion of such, then dissolve it. It is, no question, the foresight of this and other consequences of the like nature, that forces the most of the now Prelats, to maintaine the absolute and essential necessity of Prelacy in the Church, against the evidence of Scripture

and Antiquity. *Obj.* 2. But what was done in the Year 1662. for the introduction of Prelacy in this Church, was but a repossessing her of it, that had been ejected *An.* 1638? *Ans.* 1. The ejection of Prelacy *Anno* 1638. was but the purgeing of Presbytery from Prelacy, that had been brought in upon it, after Prelacy had been cast off by this Church in her first Reformation of Religion from Popery: It is evident from Histories, the books of discipline first and second acts of Parlt. Particularly that of the Year 1592. the National Covenant, and the records of the generall Assemblies, that with the Reformation of Religion in doctrine and worship, Prelacy was also removed and cast out of this Church, as an high corruption in her government. So that from the Reformation of Religion from Popery, Presbytery had the first possession. It is true, the Bishops that then were, did continue in their bishopricks, and keeped their places in *Parlt.* but without all Church power & jurisdiction, that they had formerly exercised in the times of Popery predomining in this Church; And when their Bishopricks came to vaik thorow death, their places were not filled with others, as formerly had been done, till *Mortons* Regency, who for the legal right of their revenues (which he laboured to ennance for his owne use, and could not legally come at, without some shadow of them) endeavoured to bring them in (of which he repented at his death, as is to be seen in the history of the *Duglasses*) which occasioned a hot contest betwixt him & the Church at that time, in her assemblies, who stoutly opposed prelacie, and never gave it over, till by law and practice it was wholly cast out of this Church, *Anno* 1592.

1592. But King *James* afterwards falling too much in love with wordly designs and interests, for facilitating the much courted and desired succession to the crowne of *England* (to which Prelacy was then judged necessare) laboured by sinister and subtile wayes, the introduction of Prelacy upon the Church, (which then was most averse therefrom) that he gave not over his designe in this, till he had setled it by law *Anno* 1612. and brought it in upon Presbytery: but Prelacy not being content with this establishment and exaltation, it attained to in the foresaid Year, never ceased working by its impositions, till it came to that hight of usurpation on Church & State, that procured its ruine *Anno* 1638. All this is so clear from the preceeding records, particularly *Spotswoods* history, that he must be either an utter stranger to these, or els impudently malicious, that denyeth it. Do men think, we are such ignorants of and strangers to these things, that we are not able to discover the vanities and lies of some of that party, who have put pen to paper, and contradicted all this; as the Author of the *seasonable case*, and others, who contrare to all evidence, will maintaine the possession of Prelacy in this Church since the reformation? 2. Supponeing Prelacies possession in this Church since the reformation (which is notourly fals) till its last ejection *Anno* 1638. as it was in *England*; yet till its divine right be proven, it can claime no *jus* or right in the Church of God, whose concerns cannot be antiquated and proscribed by length of time; Otherwise most of the popish heresies, idolatries and superstitions, should have nigh as good clame, for their being in this Church, as Prelacy; and it is like,

if ever Popery aime at its restauration, and come any length towards it, in this Church, it will build itself on this foundation, among others; as Prelacy does this day, in the laws establishing it. *Obj.* But the Magistrat bringing in Prelacy, and commanding all to receive and submit to it, (Prelacy being, as some say, a thing indifferent) all should obey? *Ans.* leaving the debat about the Magistrats power to the last head of our discourse, where it shall be considered alittle; we say 1. Whatever power the Magistrat hath about the Church, and her concerns as such, it is astricted and subordinated, to the Word of God, which the greatest Patrons of *Erastianisme* do yeeld, as *Vedelius*; yea *Erastus* himself and all of that Sect: hence the Magistrat may not command any thing in the Church, that is contrare to, or without it; and if he do, none are bound to obey such commands, as all Protestants grant: therefore till it be made to appear, that Prelacy is allowed and appointed in the word, our non-obedience or non-submission to it, altho commanded by the Magistrat, cannot be justly condemned. It is true, *Stillingfleet* is at much paines to prove it to be indifferent, but on such grounds as shake the foundation of our faith, the perfection of the holy Scriptures; and with so little successe, as we remaine the more confirmed in the contrare: wo were to us, if we had no better grounds for Presbytery, then the strongest pleaders for Prelacy have yet shewed for it. 2. The Magistrat with the subject being under the divine obligations of Covenants and oaths against Prelacy, have no power to command its reception, neither can the subject give the obedience required, without horrid

horrid sin against God; If in such a case, a power in the Magistrat to do, and command contrare to such divine obligations and engagements, and an obligation on the subject to obey these, be asserted, is there not a door opened to the introduction of any Religion what soever? And a power granted to and established in the Magistrat, to make void all obligation of obedience to God? Which, to us, is terrible to think on. Are not our Antagonists then forced, either to assert this power on the Magistrat; Or els to prove the mater of these Covenants to be sinful and unjust, and consequently not obligatory on this Church? One of these two they must do, before they can expect our obedience to the present lawes anent it. We grant, some of that party have undertaken this task, as to the last; but with so small fruit, that on a serious and impartial perusal of their Argueings about it, we continue more confirmed in the contrare, then before the said perusal: whether this proceeds from our dulness and incapacity to teach their arguments, or the weakness of the same, we leave it to the unbyassed to judge. 3. We assert, that whatever the Magistrat may do, either in causing or dissolveing of Church relations and engagments; yet he cannot do this, immediatly and of himself, but by the Church; and the reason is; as the fixing and establishing of Churches relations and engagments betwixt Ministers and Churches, does arise and flow from Christs institutions and precepts in his word; so the application of these to individuals in the Church, either in causing or dissolveing them, is in the Church, and not in the Magistrat: he may command the Church to act her part in this, but cannot

do it himself, for the power of calling and mission belongs to the Church, not to the Magistrat; as all Divines ancient and moderne assert, and as, we suppose, is sufficiently proven afterwards.

Arg. 4. The way of the Corats entering into Congregations puts a bar on our subjection to them, that we dar not owne them, for the lawful pastors of this Church: for as their entry is without the Church, and the way that Christ hath setled in his hous for that end, so they have come in on congregations, in wayes, which we judge corrupt, and without all warrant from the Word of God, & the practice of the primitive times: In the search of Scripture, and pure Antiquity, we find, that ordination by Ministers, the election and call of the people, was the way, by which Ministers entered into congregations, and not the institution and collation of the Bishop, nor the presentation of Patrons; which, as they have their pedegry and origination from Popery; (a part of the tyranny of that Hierachy) so they are but late human inventions, derogating from, & vitiating the institutions of Christ about this mater, and that several wayes; as. 1. This way of their entry, by the Bishops institution and collation, does suppone, that their ordination does not sufficiently impowe them, to the exercise of the Ministery, without a further licence; which is contrare to the end of ordination, & the nature of the Ministerial power; that, by vertue of its ends and the commands of Christ, does bind the persons invested therewith, to its exercise, without which, he cannot prove faithful to his Master, nor attain the ends of his Ministry, the conversion and edification of sinners. It is true, the Bishops

dominion,

dominion, in ſubjecting of his Creaturs to him, is ſtrengthened thereby; but it everts the very end and nature of ordination, that, by this device, is only made to give *potentiam remotam*, not *proximam*. 2. The Patrons preſentation, as it takes away the peoples right of election and conſent, granted them by Chriſt Jeſus; ſo it ſuppons ordination to give no right to the mantainance; or, at leaſt, ſuſpends it; (the effect of preſentations being, in the grant of all, to give a right to the ſtipend;) which we aſſert, according to the word, to be the effect of ones being the Paſtour of ſuch a people, who, by divine commands are bound to maintaine him in all outward neceſſaries for his incouragment in the work, and enabling him to do thoſe duties, both common and ſpecial, which he cannot do without it; To ſay, one is the Paſtour of ſuch a congregation; and yet hath not juſt right to the provided maintinance, is againſt the commands of Chriſt, and the practice of the Church in many ages. But, as this is amongſt the many other pieces of ſlavery, unto which men, throw ambition and luſt, have ſubjected the Church of Chriſt; ſo the Curats, entering this way, we cannot receive, nor give up ourſelves to them, as our guids and Paſtours under Chriſt.

Arg. 5. Many Congregations, into which the Curats are entered, are under a ſtanding obligation to their former Paſtours; not only on the account of the paſtoral relation betwixt them, but for the engagments they came under to ſuch, in their call and reception of them; which is not diſſolved by any thing we have yet ſeen: ſure we are, the Magiſtrat can not do it: *Obj. Solomon*; for the Crime of Treaſon

ſon, Committed by *Abiathar* againſt the ſtate, banished him from *Jeruſalem*, (where the Tabernacle was) and Confined him to *Anathoth*, his owne inheritance, by which he habitually diſinabled him, from exerciſing the prieſts office: Therefore Magiſtrats may depoſe and exautorat the Miniſters of the Goſpel. *Anſ.* How wide and inconcludent is this conſequence? it is only ſaid in the text 1. *Kings* 2. 26, 27. that here moved him to *Anathoth*, which is but a Civil ſentence. *Obj.* 2. It is ſaid vers 27. that *Solomon* thruſt him out from being prieſt unto the Lord. *Anſ. Solomon* did this *conſecutive*, and not *formaliter*; it was a neceſſare conſequent of his deſerved ſentence of banishment, to which he was bound, on the juſtice of the ſentence, to yeeld and ſubmit: a conſequent that will neceſſarlie follow on the deeds of others, to whom our adverſaries will not grant the formal power of exautorating of Miniſters; ſuppone a man by ſmiting, or a phyſician by adminiſtring unwholſome phyſick, do habitually diſinable a Miniſter to the exerciſe of his miniſtrie; will it therefore follow, that he doeth depoſe him from his miniſtrie, or hath the formal power of ſo doing? No wayes. And ſeing the Scripture is plaine in shewing the accomplishment of the Lords word, ſpoken againſt the houſe of *Elie* by *Samuel*, in removing of *Abiather*, and in him, *Elie's* houſe, from the High-prieſt-hood; and alſo the way how it was done; not by a formal ſentence of deprivation deveſting *Abiather* of his office, but by a civil ſentence of confinement to *Anathoth*, that neceſſarly removed him from the Tabernacle, and diſinabled him to do his office there; why do men contend? But ambition

bition to gaine its deſigne will keep at any hold, how weak ſoever. *Obj.* 3. As this deed of *Solomons* did diſcharge *Abiather* of his former tyes and obligations, to the exerciſe of this office in the Tabernacle, and opened a door for bringing in another prieſt in his roome; ſo we think the Magiſtrats ſentence now does the ſame, to the ejected miniſters, ſeing they are bound to ſubmit to civil ſentences, and the Church may not want Paſtours. *Anſ.* Although we yeeld the *Antecedent*, yet we deny the *conſequent:* for 1. becauſe the parallel betwixt *Abiathers* caſe, and ours runeth wyde: becauſe (1.) *Abiathers* ſentence was juſt, his crime deſerved it, and much more: but ours is not ſo; as the preceeding and ſubſequent reaſons make out. 2. *Abiathers* ſentence was perſonal, and terminated on himſelf only, and did not reach the reſt of the preiſts: ours is againſt all that do not conforme. 3. His was founded on a civil crime againſt the State, and perſon of the King, to wit, treaſon. Our alledged crime is Eccleſiaſtick, for not complying with a courſe of defection from the truth and wayes of Chriſt, to which we and all ſtand engaged by ſolemne Covenants and oaths, which tye us, in our ſeveral capacities and ſtations, to withſtand the contrare corruptions, now brought in upon us. (4.) *Abiathers* punishment, to which he was formally ſentenced, was purely civil, confinement to ſuch a place: Ours, altho it be partly civil, yet is moſtly Eccleſiaſtick; (which is not within the power of the Magiſtrat) we are not only robed of our livelyhoods and confined; but inhibited the exerciſe of our Miniſtrie, and ſtated by ſentence, in a habitual ceſſation from the exerciſe of it, which is truely depri-

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vation. (5.) *Abiathers* ſentence and punishment was not inflicted, in a time of defection, and for withſtanding of it: ours is paſſed in ſuch a time, and for reſiſting of the ſame, and out of deſigne, on our Rulers part, to carry on their intended defection. 2. The iniquous commands, ſentences and punishments of men (where invincible force is not) does not untye our obligations to God and men; that we by the authority of God are under, for ſerving of him and others in our day.

Arg. 6. If congregations have a juſt right and power of electing and calling of their Miniſters; then thoſe that come in upon them without this, are not to be eſteemed their Paſtours, nor to be ſubjected to as ſuch by congregations, but to be withdrawn from: But here it is ſo; the Curates have entered on congregations, without this election and call of the people, their juſt right and priviledge. All the debat will be about the *Antecedent* of the *firſt propoſition*, which to us is clear from Scripture and pureſt Antiquity, as our orthodox Divines prove againſt the Papiſts. All that *Bellarmin* hath to ſay to this, is the power of the Church to alter and change theſe and other things of the like nature; the very anſwer of our adverſaries: but how or from what this is made good, is not yet ſhowne us: Antiquity is ſo clear and full in this, that it is a wonder, that they, who plead ſo much for prelacy from it, can be able to call it here: if the Prelacy, controverted among us, had but half of the evidence from Antiquitie, that the peoples right and power of election hath, it had gon far to have determined the queſtion in its behalf, with ſome that yet ſtand aloofe from it: this ſhews, it is

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not the evidence or inevidence of arguments, that resolves many, anent the debats of these times; but interest and lust that sweys them more, then the love of truth. But more of this afterwards.

Arg. 7. Hearing of, submiting to, & receiving of ordinances from the Curates alone, and not from others, is enjoyned by law, and required as the signe of our compliance with, and subjecting to the present lawes, bringing in and establishing of Prelacy, with other corruptions, which we dare not owne. Hearing, and receiving ordinances from such, hath a twofold bar put upon it to us; an unqualified instrument or object; and the respect that by the law it is made to have to the corruptions obtruded upon this Church, as the signe of our compliance with and subjection to these. The command of God about hearing, does constitut the object and instrument (what and whom) we should hear: As we are not to hear all doctrines, but these that are sound, so we are not to hear and receive all, that pretend to come in Christs name, but these, of whose mission we have some rational evidence; at least against which, we have no just exceptions. This, as to the Curats, is made out by the former arguments. But besides this, the signe appointed and determined by the law, and required of all in this Church, is that they not only withdraw from, and do not hear the ejected and non-conforme Ministers; but that they hear and submit to Ministers, that comply with and enter into this Church, by the Prelates: which to us makes hearing and receiving of ordinances from them, a practical approbation of, and compliance with Prelacy, and other corruptions, contained in

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the law: for such is the connection between the signe and the thing signified, that he that yeelds to give the signe, doth in all rational construction approve the thing signified. *Obj.* But hearing and receiving is a duty commanded by God, which being so, cannot cease to be such by the Magistrats command enjoyning it? *Ans.* In this answer our Opponents do ordinarly triumph; but to unfold its vanity and insufficiency in this mater, let it be considered. 1. That Gods law in constituting of duty does not only determine the act, but the objects and instruments, about and by which, they are to be exercised, & without which they are not duty, nor acts of obedience to God, so that is not the act simply, that is made duty, but in its respect to such and such objects and instruments: as for instance, praying is a duty, not simply in it self considered; but in its respect to God in his son Christ Jesus, for such and such things, he commands and allows in his word; so it is in hearing, whose object and instrument must be such as is appointed in the word, other ways it is not duty, but in many cases, a positive sin; for the commands of God about hearing, do restrict it, in its objects and instruments, without which, it is not duty; so that we must carefully see, what it is we hear, and whom. Let our adversaries first answer our former arguments, and prove that they are those, whom by the commands of God we are appointed to hear, and we shall yeeld. 2. The thing commanded by the Magistrat in this case and mater, is not a duty; let them prove it that assert this. We grant, hearing of the Gospel, and receiving of the ordinances, is a duty; but only as it suppons and takes in lawfully

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called and sent Ministery (known to be such,) to whom the dispensation of the word is commited: none will say, it is a duty to hear the word and receive ordinances from those, that are not sent, or have no just authority to dispense the same: the Magistrats commands in his present laws, restricts hearing of the word, & receiving of ordinances to such & such, inhibiting these as to others; which commands not having the due instruments appointed by God in the performance of this duty, do not enjoyn a duty but a sin. *Obj.* 2. If the Prelats & their Curats be Ministers of the Gospel; then they are to be heard, & ordinances should be received from them; for the Ministerial power gives to the persons invested therewith, not only a right to preach the word & dispense ordinances, & maketh their acts valide; but it binds them to the doing of these; and all others to submit to them in the exercise of their power: as is apparent in all relations, & the mutual duties, that the persons under them owe to one another; so that if Ministers be bound to preach the Gospel, and dispense its ordinances, the people must likewise be oblidged to hear and receive ordinances from them? *Ans.* Albeit we should yeeld the Prelats and Curats to be Ministers; to the denying of which, they have given and do give to many, too much ground, by their open avowed perjury, enmity at and opposition to true godliness; their renuncing of Jesus Christ for their immediat Supream head, by subjecting themselves to another foraigne Supream in the Church; and their wicked and flagitious lives) yet the consequence will not hold: for. 1. The true state of the question is, whether we should receive & submit to them, as the lawfully called & appropriat Pa-

stors of this Church; which for the former and subsequent reasons we deny. And we would gladly see how they will prove it, for although intruders upon the Church be Ministers, yet their intrusion puts a sufficient bar on peoples reception of and submission to them; as we have made out both *in thesi* & *in hypothesi*: wherefore in so far, as hearing & receiving of ordinances from Prelatical Ministers, in our case, is an acknowledgment of this, we refuse it. 2. Peoples obligation to submission to Ministers, does not immediatly flow from the being of the Ministerial power and authority, in those cloathed therewith; there are, besides this, other things that must concur to the causing of this obligation, which, if they be wanting, will make it void, or at least suspend it; as the rational evidence of its being in persons pretending to the Ministery, the removal of just impediments, the Churches call, &c. so that there are somethings either physical or moral, that, if they fall out, will suspend this obligation *in actu secundo*, while it remaines *in actu primo*; as inability of body, just suspension for a time, fundamental heresies, intrusion, &c. now many of these being existent on the part of the Prelats and their Curats, in our present case, we finde ourselves under no divine obligation to hear and receive ordinances from them. We shall not here urge the judgment and practice of our worthy reformers anent the Romish Priests, Jesuits, and others in orders, among them, who sustained the validity of ordinances dispensed by such; and yet held, that they should not be heard, nor ordinances received from them. The instance of the pharisies and the scribes, *Matth.* 23. will not be found to mi-

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litat againſt this, till it be made out, that they were intruders, which yet none hath done.

Arg. 8. It is of no little weight to us, when added to the former, that the generality of theſe violently thruſt-in on congregations, are either inſufficient or ſcandalous; (creatures we confeſs fitted for carrying on of the Prelats deſignes, againſt this Church and us) by whom the poor people were, and yet are in hazard, throw Ignorance, Prophannes, Atheiſme, and a Spirit of deluſion, abounding in all corners of this Land: who, inſtead of preventing and cureing of the ſame, do rather further and advance theſe Church-deſtroying evils; as we do not make perſonal ſcandal, of it ſelf, a ſufficient ground of withdrawing from ordinances, diſpenſed by a Miniſter, guilty thereof; yet when theſe are found in the carriage of thoſe, whoſe entry is corrupt, and ſuch as cannot be juſtifyed, we cannot but think ourſelves under ſtraiter tyes to be ware of, and fly from ſuch: partly becauſe of the little or no ground we have to expect any ſpiritual advantage from their adminiſtration of holy things: and partly for the precepts we find in the word for avoiding and ſhuning of ſuch *Philip.* 3. with many others. Shall we give up ourſelvs to the guidance and conduct of ſuch, in the wayes of life, having nothing to engadge us thereto, but the meer pleaſure and will of men, who, we know, are carrying on corrupt deſignes, tending to the overthrow of Religion in its purity & power? What a folly and madneſs were this? It is ſaid, that our charge, in this, is falſe and unjuſt. But we appeal to the experience and obſervation of the generality of Profeſſours in this Church, good and bad,

who have been & are witneſſes to their deportments.

Arg. 9. Beſides theſe there were ſeveral things, in the ſtate of caſe of the time, and the circumſtances of it, that withheld, and yet withhold us, from ſubjecting to the prelates and their curates; which we wish were laid to heart by all as they are concerned. As 1. For making way to the introduction of prelacy, the very foundations of civil government were shaken and unhinged, by the diſannullig and reſcinding of ſuch a ſeries of Parliaments, for many years, in the moſt of which, there were, according to ancient cuſtomes and lawes, all that, amongſt us, is held and reputed eſſential to the Conſtitution of Parliaments. By this deed not only the Conſtitution of former Parliaments are ſtruck at; but (as is to be ſeen in the reaſons given for it, in the *act reſciſſorie*) a preparative is made, for the changing of the Government, by any that, in after ages, have a minde for, and power to effect it. Although the Parliament of *England*, at that time, was as highly prelatical, and as much made for the Kings deſignes, as ours; yet they forbore ſuch a deed, anent the Long-lived-Parliament, albeit they had the ſame reaſons and grounds for it, that we pretended. 2. This change made in the Church, was accompanied, and yet is, with ſuch a ſpeat of enimity at, and oppoſition to true godlines, in its neceſſare exerciſes, that the perſons that favoured any thing of Religion, ſobriety and conſcience, came under a cloud, and were diſcountenanced, even from the higheſt to the loweſt, as perſons not fit to be intruſted in any place of office or power: while theſe that were known to be of diſſolute lives, and given to all ſorts of wickednes,

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were much made of, countenanced and intrusted, as the only confidents of the time; from whence it came to pass, that wickedness and prophanity finding it self encouraged, and reyns loosed to it, abounded in all parts of the land, to the grief of the truely godly, and the great scandal of the Protestant reformed religion at home and abroad. If it were not for too much prolixity, this might be made to appear from a multitude of undenyable, but lamentable instances; which for brevities sake we forbear, not loveing to stir in this filthy puddle. 3. As to the Government of the Church in particular, the case was wholly altered, from that of our worthie Predecessors, in the former Prelats time: for, as prelacy was then subtilly brought in upon them, by degrees, and not all at once; so they continued in the possession of the Government of the Church, that had been setled by law, and never legally or actually disinabled to meet, and exercise the same, in their fixed and ordinare judicatories: but continuing as formerly in Presbyterated meetings, had the Prelats thrust in upon them; as is evident from history, even of *Spotiswood*; But in our case, Prelacy is at the first raised by law to its greatest height; Presbytery discharged, cashiered and ejected out of this Church; all lawes for it, either in late or former times, being disanulled and abrogated; the meetings of Ministers in their fixed Presbyterial and Synodical assemblies inhibited, under severe penalties by acts of Councel, which became so universally obeyed, that Presbytery had neither a legal nor actual being, in the time that Prelacy was erected & brought in upon this Church: So that at its actual introduction, we were, conforme to

Lawes, required to come in, ſubmit to, and concur with the government ſetled by them, which was purely Prelatical and *Eraſtian*. They that deny this muſt contradict the law, and make the lawmakers liars, if the laws and actings conforme thereto have any ſenſe, that may be rationallie deduced therefrom. Hence, what was required was directly contrare to our principles & known judgment, which to this day, we never ſaw any convincing reaſons, to make us relinquish, Here we cannot, but complean of the palpable injuſtice, done us by the Author of the *ſeaſonable caſe* (falsly ſo called) who contrare to all evidence, makes the caſe now and then alike. But notorious lies and untruths muſt be made uſe of to fill up the roome of truth, ſo shamefully deſerted by that party. 4. The government of the Church that then was, was by law totally ſubverted, and Prelacy brought in its place, at and by the meer authority of the King; the government thereof by a preceeding law or act being wholly put into his hands, (the authority of Parliament interpoſed afterwards for the eſtablishing of prelacy, being by this only corroborative and precarious;) asif it were only of his frameing and making, and had no higher derivation, but that of humane authority; which we look upon, as an high derogation of the Regal and Supream authority of Chriſt Jeſus, the alone Head and King of his Church; and a dreadfull preſumption in changing the laws and ordinances, enacted and inſtituted by Him in his houſe; which all Chriſtians, eſpecially Proteſtants, eſteem ſacred and inviolable. Can we, according to the principles we have received and drunk in, from the word of

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the liveing God, allow of this forme of Government, this way introduced into the Church? Thoſe that love eaſe, and things of this world, may think light of all; but it is not ſo to us, who are, through grace, reſolved to owne no other Head of that body, (then Chriſt Jeſus) of whom we profeſſe ourſelves members. The recent and fresh memory of the National and Solemne League and Covenants; under the tye of which this Nation and Church came oftener then once; all rankes and degrees of perſons, Noble and Ignoble, from the Kings Majeſty to the loweſt Subject, being ſolemnly engadged thereby againſt the evils and corruptions ejected by them. The obligation of which had been enforced, and legally ſecured by a continued ſeries of lawes and practiſes, for a long time, that ſeemed to promiſe all imaginable ſecuritie, to the work of Reformation, againſt the outmoſt aſſaults of its adverſaries: nothing was left undone, that could be attempted by rational men in this caſe. While all theſe things were in being, and recent in the memory of all, at home and abroad, at one dash, in ſo little a time, to raze to the foundations, all the former ſuperſtructure, and build up the contrare; and that by perſons, who, (for their generality) had been ſo active for, and ſo deeply engadged in former proceedings, is ſtrange to think on; eſpecially conſidering the verbal ſecurities, and engagments made unto us, immediatly before this change. We ſay, in this caſe, to give the concurrence and complyance required, in joyning with and receiving the Prelats and their Creaturs, is, beyond all queſtion, an approving of all that was done contrare to our fixed judgments & theſe obligations,

we, with the reſt of this Church came under. Let any man of conſcience put himſelf in our caſe, & ſuppone our judgment & principles to be his owne; and then let him judge, if he would not finde himſelf neceſſitated to carry, in this matter, as we have done.

Obj. Some aſſert that they, never having taken on the perſonal obligation of the Covenants, are not bound by them; for which they offer irrefragable arguments, but yet ſee it fit to hold them in. *Anſ.* However there are two things we are ſure of, *Firſt*, All Miniſters, that entered into the Church in the time of Presbytery, were taken engadged for the government of the Church, that then was, in oppoſition to Prelacy: and in or near the time that Prelacy was a bringing in into this Church, Miniſters in many Presbyteries & Synods, declared their reſolutions for adhereing to Presbytery, that then was in being, & had been exerciſed in this Church, for many years preceeding that time; but it is like (as their after carriage did make out) that theſe are knots they can eaſily looſe; ſeing they are able to maſter & overcome far greater. *Next.* That Church Covenants in the maters of God, which by vertue of divine commands & inſtitutions do antecedently bind, do obleige all in the Church, both in the time or afterwards; and that with this adventitious and ſupervenient obligation of a Covenant, beſide the former. He hath a ſtout conſcience that will get this denyed, it is ſo evidently manifeſt from *Deut.* 29: 10. &c. they muſt be arguments of iron & ſteell, that will break this Scripture in pieces. Theſe who aſſert the contrary, ſhall do well to try their ſtrength, on what the anſwerer of Mr. *Gilbert Burnets* firſt *dialogues* hath on this Subject, that have not yet received a reply.

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But it ſeems it is a piece of new policy, to make up the weakneſs of arguments, with big ſwelling words.

We might here conſider a little (if our purpoſed brevity could permit it) what one, in a certaine *manuſcript*, hath undertaken to prove in ſeveral propoſitions: but his miſtaking of the queſtion in the ſecond propoſition makes us eaſy work; it being a truth we do not deny, and in which we cloſe with our predeceſſours: ſo that all his citations of ours are to no effect: for we grant that the ſin of fellow worſhipers is no juſt ground for withdrawing from publict ordinances, where there is no juſt exceptions beſide; will it from thence follow, that we ſhould ſubmit to and hear the Curates in our preſent caſe? we muſt have other arguments then any he there produceth, before we ſubject to ſuch: neither is it a ſufficient argument, he uſeth in the 6. propoſition; that they are Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt: Suppone it be ſo, yet the conſequence is wide: we aske at them, if they think it lawful to hear and receive ordinances from our ejected and inhibited Miniſters? If they do; how comes it that they do not hear our Miniſters, but diſſwade the people from it? If they judge hearing of us unlawful; they muſt either ſay that our Miniſters are no Miniſters; or els that Miniſters may be withdrawn from and not heard, although they be Miniſters of Chriſt Jeſus: and conſequently it will follow from their own opinion, and practice anent us, that there are ſome things for hearing and receiving of ordinances, from any perſon, beſide there being Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt: Or els the charge of ſchiſme, and ſeparation, will fall as heavy on themſelves, for not hearing and receiving of ordi-

nances from our Ministers, as on us. But enough of this. Whoever reads that manuscript, will find it sufficiently answered in this short touch, for all his argueings are against his owne shadow, and misse the mark he should shoot at.

To shut up this wearysome and unpleasant subject; In the last place, we are charged with all the profanity, wickedness and enormous practices, that are commited, and do, since the erection of Prelacy, abound in the Land: yea our meetings for worship, (now branded with the anciently odious name of *Conventicles*, with which assemblies of Christians in the primitive times were noted, and designed by their persecutours) are given out and represented to the world, as the cause inductive to these horrid & abominable scandals, which are boldly asserted to be acted & commited at them, in a paper of greivances, given in from the Diocesan Synod of *Glasgow*, in Prelat *Lightons* time, and presented to the then Kings Commissioner, the *Duke* of *Lawderdal*, and the honourable privy Councel, by the *parson* of *Glasgow*, *Mr. Arthur Rosse*, and now Prelat of *Argile*, that impudent and viperous Calumniator, who, from the pulpit, & other places, useth to father all the scandals of the time, on our party and their meeting? *Ans.* passing that Prelats malicious and venemous railings against us, (as not worthy of our notice) whose notour and manifest lies, his bitter invictives, and ill grounded assertions; (which not only speaks his heart and tongue to be set on fire of hell; but renders him disliked and odious to many of his owne party) we say. 1. From whence came that fearful deluge of all sorts of profanity and wickedness, that filled the Land,

before, at, & after the last erection of Prelacy, and for a considerable time, when there were few or no Conventicles? We have not forgetten (and we hope, the sober and humble, that mourne for the abominations done in the midst of us, will not) with what a Spirit of impietie Prelacy entered into this Church, and followed it, for a long time: could our meetings for worship (called *Conventicles*) be the cause of these, when they were not, and had not a being? 2. We beg of our opposites, that they will assigne us the cause of the open reigning scandals, found in them that follow not our meetings, but keep and adhere to theirs, especially in the places, where there are no Conventicles, but an universal subjection to Prelacy? That there are such impieties reigning without any control, in these parts, is past all denyal? And what will our adversaries give for the cause of these? Surely they cannot, with any shew of reason, Father them on our meetings. 3. Is it not observeable, yea observed by all, that, in places drowned in ignorance, sin and wickedness, where Conventicles have come, and at this day are in use, a sensible reformation in persons and families hath ensued thereon, and that to the restraining of these scandalous impieties, that prevailed in these bounds before, and the shameing of these that yet live in them: can that be the cause of scandals, that in experience, is alwayes found to be the effectual means of restraining and removing of them? 4. While we cast our eyes about us, to discover the grounds, on which they fix this greivous and heavy charge, it does not appear to us, so much as to give the least degree of probability to it; yea, the evidence of the contrare is so clear and full, that

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we cannot think, our adversaries do beleeve themselves in these and other reproaches, they load us with. Sure we are, they cannot binde this charge on the doctrines we professe, and are preached in our meetings, which are contained in our printed Confessions of faith, long since emited to the world, especially in the Confession of faith, the larger and shorter Catechismes, composed by the Assembly of divines at *West Minster*. We earnestly beg of our Antagonists, that they will give instances, in any of these doctrines, (if they can) that of themselves do tend to licenciousnes and profanity? Upon a review of the whole of our doctrine, in its several parts, we cannot pitch upon one, except the doctrine of justification by faith only, throw the alone merits and blood of Christ Jesus, maintained by all protestants, except some, who of late do assert the interest of good works, as a preexistent condition of a sinners justification before God, which yet is not directly and positively done, but by indirect wayes and hints, as is to be seen in Mr *Gilbert Burnets* first dialogues, *Patrick the Pilgrim*, and the Author of the *whole duty of Man*, who resolve a sinners justification before God, in his serious purpose and endeavour of good works, at least, as a preexistent condition of it: which is not only against the doctrine of all protestants till of late (as is to be seen in their writings) but directly against the great Apostle *Paul*, in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*; whose arguments in that mater, when our adversaries have answered them, we shall consider at more length. All the reasons they give for this charge, from the head, are so fully answered by that Apostle in the 6. *Chapter* of the Epistle to the *Romans*,

mans, and 2. to the *Galatians* towards the close, that we judge it needlesse to insist any further on this. We do not charge all of the Prelatical party with this corrupt doctrine; some of them, particularly doctor *Tully*, hath so clearly and soundly asserted and vindicat the doctrine of Protestants in this mater, against the exceptions and arguments of the contrare minded, that he if living deserves thanks from all the Protestant Churches of Christ, in this and other parts of the Christian world: A doctrine that hath been esteemed fundamentall among them, and given as one great characteristick betwixt us and Papists; yea, it hath been looked upon as the note and signe of the *resurgentis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*, as she holds to or departs from the same. We are not so antiprelatical, as not to love truth, wherever we find it, and the assertor thereof for its sake; although differing from us, in some other things. 5. It is thought sufficient ground for this charge, that some, yea many of the persons that come to and haunt our meetings, are found not to be conscientious and Christian in their walk, but flagitious, or, in many of their practises, scandalous? We cannot think our adversaries are serious in this, & do beleeve as they speak, seing. (1.) This does fall as heavy, and will, to onlookers, reflect as much, and more, on the objectors themselves, as on us; whose meetings for worship are found to be the sinck of all debauched and profaine persons thorow the Land; can they refuse this? It is like, the foresight of this forced them to say, in their lybel of greivances against us, that the abominations mentioned in one Article, were commited at our meetings, and not by persons present at them; otherwise their assemblies

ſemblies for worship should have been as chargeable therewith, as ours: but in this our Antagoniſts are like to the perſecutours of the Chriſtians in the primitive times, who charged them for having theſe or the like abominations commited at their aſſemblies, as is to be ſeen in Church Hiſtories. The Lord deliver us from, and rebuke the lying Spirit, that is entered into and poſſeſſeth many. (2.) But if the preſence of wicked and ſcandalous perſons, at the aſſemblies of Chriſtians for hearing of the word, and performing of other acts of worship, be ſufficient ground for chargeing the wickedneſſes and impieties of ſuch on them, as the cauſe inductive to ſcandals; will not the aſſemblies, that Chriſt, his Apoſtles, Miniſters and Chriſtians keeped in all ages, be as lyable to this charge, as we, who excluded none, but admited all to the hearing of the word, and ſome other acts of worship, as is manifeſt from Scripture and Hiſtory? whatever our adverſaries will ſay for clearing of Chriſt Ieſus, his Apoſtles, &c. will acquit us. (3.) Do not men know, that in preaching of the Goſpel to ſinners, we should deſigne and labour their converſion, as much as the edification of the converted? Is not the Goſpel, with which Miniſters are intruſted, the mean and power of God to the one, as well as to the other? And ſeing this is our deſigne, as it hath been our practice, ſo it is our reſolution, not to exclude any from our aſſemblies, how wicked ſoever they have been, or are: Truth is, to charge us and our meetings, with the ſinnes and ſcandals of thoſe that frequent the ſame, is to reproach the Goſpel of Chriſt, and to Father all the wickedneſſe of its hearers on it, contrare to its grand deſigne, which is to ſave

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sinners from sin, and all the miseries that follow upon it.

SECT. V.

Some Reasons, why the Indulgence *was not accepted.*

IN the next place, we come to the head of the *Indulgence*, the not allowing of which, hath been represented, as a full evidence of our pivish, wilful, and stiff disposition to unpeaceableness and disloyalty: but we hope, when our carriage, in this mater, is seriously thought upon, and the reasons that determined us to this refusal, are weighted in the ballances of the sanctuarie; this charge will be found light; and we are confident, that upon trial, it will appear, we are not against, but with all expressions of thankfulnes, shall be ready to intertaine, and receive any libertie for the Gospel its true interest, and our selves (that is consistent with our known principles) that the Magistrat shall be pleased to grant us. We look upon it, as an unjust state of the question, in this mater, which hath been offered by some; whether the Magistrat, *jure*, may, or have it within the compass of his Magistratical power, to give liberty, to Ministers and people, for serving and worshiping of God in his Son Christ Iesus, according to his word; this we do not deny, but chearfully grant, that although the exercise of Church power, that is properly such, be independent on the Magistrat; yet the peacable exercise of it is truely from him: it belongs to him, no doubt, to encourage,

courage, countenance and protect the Church, against all enemies, and to relieve her of oppression when under it: to this he is impowered, and oblidged, both as a Magistrat and as a Christian. Neither is it with us a question, whether the Magistrat may command Ministers to the duties of their function; nor whether he may exeem them from the hazard of suffering, to which they are obnoxious by law, for their non-conformity; nor yet whether he may confine Ministers, simply and abstractedly considered from our present case (which is only proper to the Magistrat, and not all to the Church.) All these and much more we yeeld to the Magistrat, about persones and maters Eccleſiastical, according to the Word. But the true state of the question to us, is, whether the Magistrat *Jure Magistratico* may of himself and immediatly without the Church, & the previous election of the people, assigne and send Ministers to particular Churches, to take the fixed and pastoral oversight of them; prescribe rules and directions to them, for the exercise of their Ministery; and confine them to the said congregations. The question thus stated being complex, and consisting of several branches, conform to the acts of Councel anent the *indulgence*; we must of necessity (for giving a just accompt of the grounds of our dissatisfaction therewith) speak to them severally, in some assertions with the reasons subjoyned.

Assertion First, The Magistrat, by vertue of his Magistratical power, cannot of himself and immediatly, assigne or send Ministers to particular congregations, to take the pastoral charge and oversight of them. For 1. We finde not in all the Word of

of God, any such power, given to, or exercised by the Magistrat, in the Church: none hath yet given any instances of this: if there be, let them be produced, and we shall acquiesce. All acknowledge the Church not to be founded on the law of nature, but on positive institution, and supernatural revelation; and therfore not to be governed in wayes and methods of Mens invention, but in these that are revealed by the Holy Scriptures; without which there cannot be a Church; so that she owning her being, constitution, and all to them; there must be some evident proof produced from these, before we can yeeld to any such power in the Magistrat: how long shall we exspect this? (2.) Also, we finde the Church in the possession and exercise of this power, from the times of the Apostles, to the breaking up of the reformation by *Luther*, and others in *Germany*: as is manifest from Scripture and History. We grant, there was for some time, a considerable debate betwixt the *Pope* and the *Emperour* of *Germany*, about the investiture of Bishops; which gave the rise to other Princes claming of the same, & seasing upon it: but what says this to the mission of Ministers, & application of their Ministery to particular congregations? For as Prelacy was the invention of men, and the cause of horrid contentions in Churches and States; so neither it, nor the practices occasioned thereby, can be any regulating precedent for us: besides, in all these contests about investituts, betwixt the Pope and Princes, the mission of Ministers was never questioned, but alwayes acknowledged, as proper to the Church, and not to the Magistrat, which will be clear to any that will be at paines to

read Church Hiſtory. (3.) The ſending of Miniſters to particular congregations, is an act of government, purly and formally Eccleſiaſtical, and not Civil; and therefore incompetent to the Magiſtrat: Let any conſider it, in its cauſes, mater, object and ends, and they ſhall finde it ſo: for the perſons ſent are Miniſters; the work they are ſent on, is to preach the Goſpel and diſpenſe its ordinances; theſe they are ſent to, are the Churches of Chriſt; the end for which they are ſent to ſuch, is to gather in and perfect the body of Chriſt; this is *finis operis*. We know of nothing that can be ſaid againſt this; But that it is not purely Eccleſiaſtick in the efficient cauſe? *Anſ.* To this we reply, *Firſt*, That all uſe in morals to ſuſtaine the validity of the Arguments, taken from the nature of the act, to the unduenes of it to ſuch, and ſuch cauſes: for it is by the reſpect of ſuch acts in morals, to their mater, objects and ends, that the bounds are determined, and ſet to them in their efficient cauſes; for inſtance, if the mater, object & ends of an act be properly civil, it is granted by all, to be undue or incompetent to a Miniſter of the Goſpel, & ſo of other acts, in their moral ſpecifical diſtinction, by which, in the law of God, they are aſſigned & made due to ſuch and ſuch efficients. But *Next*, Upon this reaſon, it ſhall be as lawful for the Magiſtrat to ordaine, and ſend perſons without ordination, to preach the Goſpel, which is every way abſurd. (4.) The ſending of Miniſters to preach the Goſpel, and to overſee Churches is an act of the poteſtative miſſion, (one part of the keyes of the kingdom of God) granted by Chriſt to his Church, and never to the Magiſtrat: from no part of the word can it be made

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appear, that Christ hath given this power to the Magistrat; we finde it given to the Ministers of the Gospel, *Matth.* 16: 19. with several other places of Scripture: But, as to the Magistrat, there is *altum silentium*. But that this sending of Ministers, is an act of potestative mission, we hope will not readily be denied: if any do; we ask, whether Ministers go to such congregations, on a special delegation from Christ, more then to others? If they do, then it must flow from this power of mission in the Church; If they go not, on this special delegation, then they run unsent, and are not the Pastours of these flocks, more then of others; and consequently they have no obligations upon them to feed these, more then any other congregation: which is absurd. For, beside the power of preaching and dispensing of ordinances, there is alwayes a special delegation of the person, to such and such a people, by which he becometh the Ambassadour & messenger of Christ Jesus, whom they are bound to hear and submit to, as such. (6.) This act of sending Ministers to congregations, suppons several things, that are beyond the line and cognition of the Magistrat, as such; as the trial of Ministers gifts; the knowledge of the spiritual State of the congregation; the futablness or unsutablness of Ministers gifts to such and such a people; ability to judge and cognosce in these, as the mater and ends of this work require; with many other things, which not being granted to the Magistrat as such, the work, to which these are necessarily requisite, cannot belong to him: for every work, to which God calls any, hath its proper furniture of gifts and abilities, without which, none is to look

upon themselves as called thereto. (6.) Some of the great Patrons and zealous Promoters of the Magistrats power in this, and other things belonging to the Church, yeeld, that this power is in, and returns to the Church, when the Magistrat is either heathenish or heretical, as *Vedelius*; yea all are constrained to grant it. How rational this is, and how consistent with their arguments (the force of which is thereby utterly broken) let any judge: we ask, when this power is granted to be in the Church, whether it comes from Christ Iesus, or the Magistrat? (For a derived power it must be:) It cannot be from the Magistrat, who does not willingly part with any of his power; neither does religion robe the Magistrat of his power, nor depose him from his regality, and the prerogative thereof; as Protestants maintaine against the Papists: if it be derived and come from Christ (as it does) we desire to know, what way it is conveyed to her, in this case, and not in the other, when the Magistrat is Christian? As we finde no difference of cases anent this mater given in the word; so we finde the same institutions, precepts and examples therein, by which the Church is impowered and oblidged, to exercise this government without the Magistrat, to continue, not only without any restrictions to times & cases, but without any repail. We hear nothing from our adversaries, to answer this, but *ineptia*, foolish rovings. The truth is, their Arguments conclude, with as great force, against all power of government in the Church, under persecuting Magistrats, as Christian: for is there not in this case the erecting of an Empire in an Empire, which our enemies accoundt ἀσύστατον

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anddo not Miniſters, and Chriſtians, owe as much ſubjection to the Magiſtrat, in the one caſe, as in the other?

Aſſertion 2. That the right and power of Election and calling of Miniſters to particular congregations, is in the congregations themſelves, to whom they are ſent, by divine right; and not in the Magiſtrat: and therefore should not have been aſſumed by the Magiſtrat, and taken thus from them. That this power of election of Miniſters, is not in the Magiſtrat, either by divine, humane or Eccleſiaſtical laws, needs not to be much inſiſted on, ſeing Scripture and antiquity, for a thouſand years after Chriſt, gives not the leaſt ground for it. We deſire to know from our Antagoniſts, *Prelats* and *Eraſtians*, from whence came this power; or who were the givers of it to the Magiſtrat? When they have condeſcended on the orginal derivation of this power, and made it out to be juſt, then we shall conſider it; which by none of theſe parties hath been yet done; except by *Vedelius*: but on ſuch grounds, as give every particular member of the Church as good clame thereto, as he; as will be evident to any that conſiders his Arguments: for Scripture and antiquity they have none. The firſt part of the propoſition, is that which is moſt ſtuck at; The peoples right and power of election, which is denyed by our adverſaries: but we thus make it out, as our Divines have done before us. (1.) From Scripture practice and example, *Acts.* 1: 15. to the end, *Chap.* 6: verſ. 1. to 9. and 14: verſ. 13. where we have Arguments both from the more to the leſſe, and from the leſſe to the more; which are acknowledged by all, to be concluding Topicks.

and much used in the Scriptures. When our adversaries have the like from Scripture and antiquity, how use they to insult; but poor we must not be allowed this liberty. (2.) It is evident from the constant practice, use and custome of the Church, from the Apostles times, till the *Popes* of *Rome* inhanced and swallowed up all power and priviledges; either in taking them away, or bringing them into an absolute dependance upon them. For this we appeal to the records and histories of the Church, yea to the histories of the Pops, *PLATINA* and others: in many of which, we shall not only finde the uncontrolled use of the peoples election mentioned; but its right justified and defended, and many canons of Councels made for its regulation, and against the encroachments, that were by some made upon it; in a mater so clear, and granted by the adversary, we need not spend time. If any ask us, why we plead antiquity here, and reject it anent Prelacy? Our Answer is, because we finde in this question, as it is stated betwixt us and the adversaries, antiquity full and clear, which it is not in the other: Let the State of the question about Prelacy, as it is now agitated betwixt us, be in every part of it, brought to the pure times of antiquity; and if it can be evidenced & made out, even as to the sole power of ordination & jurisdiction, and superiority of some Ministers over other Ministers of the Gospel; and we shall yeeld the cause and quietly submit: but in the business of the peoples right of election, it is beyond all contradiction clear, even in the confession of our Antagonists. (3.) All relations amongst rational creatures that are not founded on nature, & are free, there is al-

wayes requisite mutual consent; from which, as its proper cause and foundation, it does result; as is to be seen in all sorts of such relations. It is not denyed, but yeelded by all, that there is a particular special relation betwixt a Minister and the Congregation, he in ordinare serves: we desire to know, what is the cause or foundation of it, if it be not this? All other relations of this kinde are founded upon consent, and why not this? (4.) The good effects that have come to the Church by the free and voluntar election of the people, where it hath been admited, and in use, confirmes us not alittle in this perswasion: we have obseved in universal experience, that not only a more universal and chearful subjection hath been given to the Ministry of those, that entered this way into congregations; but a faithful and able Ministry hath been more generally propagated, to the great advantage of immortal souls: if we may gather the nature of the tree, by the fruit, we cannot say, this is evil; but truly good.

Assertion 3. It belongs not to the Magistrat to prescribe Rules, and give Directions to the Ministers of the Gospel, for regulating the exercise of their Ministry, as is done in this *indulgence*. Our reasons for this, are (1.) We see no precept, institution, and example in all the Scriptures, impowering the Magistrat to this; we hope, none will expect we should receive and subject to a power, that hath no warrant nor foundation in the word; seing all church power owes its descent and derivation from it: our Antagonists themselves grant, that not only the power they ascribe to the Magistrat, is in and from the Scriptures; but the regulation of its exercise,

should be conforme thereto; so that there will be no debat about the consequence. The great Patrons of *Erastianisme* plead the instances of *David* and *Solomons* ordering the courses of the *Levits* and the priests, and of other things relating to the worship of God, in the time of the old Testament; but to little purpose: seing they acted therein as Prophets, and at the directions and instructions given from God, by the Prophets; and not as Magistrats; as is clear from the very letter of the Scriptures, in many places, 2 *Chron.* 29: vers. 25. and 35: vers. 15. with others: If the Magistrats of our time, did produce such warrant for what they assume to themselves, and do in this mater, how readily should they be obeyed? But the *Objection* of greatest seeming strength, is that of *Hezekias* practise, keeping of the passeover in the second moneth 2. *Chron.* 30, 2. which conforme to the institution *Exod.* 12, should have been observed in the first moneth? Our *Ans.* to this is, *first*, if this practise be pleaded for a leading example to Magistrats; it will warrant Magistrats to change things institute by God, which, we hope, all will say is absurd. *Obj.* It was but the circumstance of time that he changed? *Ans.* a command or institution makes circumstances, determined by it, as unalterable by men, as the substantials of the ordinance it self: does not this, if it be concludent, impower the Magistrat to change our Sabboth, from the first to the second, or any other day in the week, as he pleaseth? What may not come in at this dore? *Next*, Our satisfying Answer to this is, that what *Hezekiah*, the Princes & Congregation did, they did it, at or by the word of the Lord concerning this alteration, and

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not of themselves, as is expres vers 12. (2.) As it is usual for commissions given to Ambassadors, by those that send them, to containe all necessary instructions, for regulating their carriage, in the discharge of their ambassage; so we finde in the Word of God rules, precepts and directions, given to the Ministers of the Gospel, about the ordering of the worship of God, and the exercise of their Ministery in all its parts; which not only impowers them for this work, but brings them under as strait Obligations to observe the same, as the work and maine substantials of the ambassage, on which they are sent: for this let 1 *Cor.* 14. two Epistles to *Timothy* with other Scripturs be consulted; and we doubt not but this will be beyond dispute with the unprejudged. If the *Erastians* could give us such commands and precepts in the word, for the Magistrats power in this, how would they triumph, and so they justly might; for they should have no such willing and cheirful assenters to them, then we; if any such thing could be shewed. (3.) This power in the Magistrat would subject Ministers to and bring them, in the exercise of their ministerie, in a dependance on him; the contrare of which we have proved before, and shall do more afterwards: The truth is, we tremble to think on the consequences of this dependance; for thereby the Magistrat may suspend the ministry, in these parts and exercises of it, that Christ Jesus cals them to, in the stated cases of the times, in which they live; as for instance, when heresies are abounding, and Professors taken with the infection of that leaven, he may put them on the preaching of doctrines not opposite to the present case, and discharge them from

meddling with doctrines contrare to the present errours; as our Magistrats have done anent some doctrines in these times: he may likewise forbid them preaching against, or censuring of these sinnes that are reigning in the place and time, in obeying of which, Ministers shall crosse the commands of Christ to them in his word, and bring themselves under the guilt of the blood of soules. If Churches and Ministers be not, in the commands, precepts, and institutions of God, exeemed from the power and impositions of men, what a sad case will they be in? (4.) The Church had and exercised this power from Scripture times in all ages, till within these hundereth years. We grant the Magistrat exercised a power about, or anent the Church; but never came this length when they did reforme, & gave any redress of corruptions, creept into the administrations of holy things; they did it by the Church, whom, in her officers, they did convocat, and require to consider the matter, and to make constitutions about it; but never essayed to do it immediatly, and by themselves; as Church Historics make evident, beyond all contradiction. (5.) It is the natural right of all moral power, to order and dispose its owne exercise, in and about the Maters that are proper to it; as might be made to appear by instances of these of the Parental, Marital Powers, &c. and the reason is, partly, because the objects and other circumstances are so many and various, that it is not possible to prescribe rules comprehensive of all particular emergents, relating to their exercise, but must be left to the prudence of those invested with them, to do therein, as they see fit and expedient, in the cases that are before them

and partly such are fitest, as having more knowledge and experience about such things, that belongs to their power, then any others. We see this yeelded to others, and why then not to Ministers, who may, in rational judgment, be presumed, to have more solide knowledge and experience, in and about the maters of God, as any? (6.) All divines (except those called *Erastian*, who are but of a late edition in the Church) yea the Prelatical ones, doe grant a *diataktik* power to the Ministery of the Gospel, about the worship and government of the Church, and the exercise of their Ministry relating thereto: and till ERASTUS the phisitian arose; it was beyond controversie among all Church writers; whether Historical or Polemick; even those, who contended for the Magistrats power, against the usurpations of the *Popes*; as is to be seen in their Tractats; from which we might adduce citations not a few; but fearing they wold prove too tedious, if inserted here, We forbeare.

Assertion 4. Albeit we grant, the power of confinement be proper to the Magistrat, and not at all to the Church (for to him only is the sword given, to be used against evil doers;) yet in the complex case, which we had before us, we durst not approve of the *indulgence*, with such a clause; seing we had not (as may be clear to any from what is said above) any other thing, in this mater, to ingadge us, to an acceptance thereof. For the act of indulgence confines the Ministers of the whole party: if it had been but some few, that this confinement reach'd, we would not have said much to it; although the sentence had been unjust. But while we consid-

considered the present universal necessity of the Church, and the obligations on us, to use our Ministery, for answering the same, we could not, with quietness to our consciences justifie nor allow of it as a favour, with such a restraint on our Ministry. If the confinment had only touched our persons, and personal concerns, we had with all patience and submission yeelded thereto; but a restraint being put on the exercise of our Ministery, in this necessitous condition of the Church, when *Papists*, *Quakers* and other subverters of truth and godliness, do multiply and abound, without all crub, we could not close with this indulgence; which, by vertue of the confinment, puts us out of capacitie, for affording that relief to the Church and immortal souls, which our office binds us to. (2.) As there are many duties and parts of our Ministerial function, which we cannot performe and exercise, but in a conjunction with others; so this indulgence cuts off from all accesse to the same, and leaves us in much worse case, then we were in before. Have we not the Gospel of Christ to maintaine against its present adversaries? Are we not bound to propagat the same in the present and succeeding ages? Do not scandals of all sorts abound, to the overthrow of truth and piety? and does not the care and burdine of seeing to and providing against the evil, that in these times, threaten the ruine of the Church, lye upon us in our ministerial capacity? And we cannot singly and apart doe what is necessare in this case, but in a conjunction with one another: no doubt, our subjecting to this confinment would render us accessory to, and bring us under the guilt of all these evil and their consequences

ces to this, and the following generations. Posterity, no question, should have all cause to curse and charge their blood upon us, which is trembling to think upon. (3.) If we may guesse at, and be ascertained of the ends and designes of mens actions, by the native effects and consequences of them; it is to us apparent and beyond denyal, that the project and intention of this contrivance, was quietly to ruine and bury our cause; seing by this confinment, and other things in this *indulgence*, all endeavours towards the succession of a faithful ministery, are cut off, and we brought unto an immediat dependance on the Magistrat, in the maters of God, and hindered to propagat the truth, in opposition to its adversaries, in other parts of the land; being thus shut up into a litle corner of the same, & cast by two's & three's and fours, into congregations; where, for the most part, there is little or no use for us; If the Apostles and other Ministers of Christ, in Scripture times, had been thus dealt with, and in policy confined, as we are; do any think, they would have submitted to, and obeyed such a confinment, which would have frustrated the ends of their office and work; and made them guilty of disobedience to their Master, from whom they received commands, inconsistent with such a sentence? And shall we subject and be consentient to a deed, that in the designe and effects thereof will infallibly destroy the cause, which, by all sorts of obligations, we are engadged to maintaine and advance to the utmost of our power? God forbid. We are not ignorant, that the confinment, with a permission to preach and exercise other parts of our ministry, in the places, to which we were to

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be confined; was a piece of policy, invented to cover the too visible encroachment on Church power, in the first act of Indulgence (which was known afterwards to stumble many) that the mater might be more smoothed, and goe the better down; while the designe was the same; which was (as is said) to bring our ministry in subjection to the Magistrat, in the maters of God; and without noise to obstruct the spreading of the Gospel, and to ruine our cause; for attaining of which, we have not yet seen a more succesful like piece of policy, then this of the *indulgence*.

Resolveing (as hath been said) to unfold our hearts, and to keep nothing up, anent what is truly greivous to, and burdens our consciences in the commands and impositions of these times; we shall adde other reasons to these, which, with the former, are the grounds of our dissatisfaction with and non-approbation of this *indulgence*: as (1.) In the Narrative of the 2. *act of indulgence*, it is declared, that this pretended favour is provided for a remedy against the evil of Conventicles, (by which we understand the assemblies of the Lords people for hearing of the word, and partaking of other ordinances from faithful Ministers of the Gospel) which the execution of laws made against the same, hath not suppressed. As this narrative speaks to all, the designe of the *indulgence*; so it shews, what we are to expect as its consequence, if approven by us, to which we dar have no accession, directly nor indirectly; for by our allowance, and submission, we shall not only prove active in hindering the propagation of the word for the future; but also shall consequentially condemne

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the former practice of the Lords servants and people, in preaching and hearing of the word; that hath been blessed, and made not a little succesful, to the advantage of the truth, and the benefite of many souls. (2.) Many by this indulgence were assigned and sent to other congregations, then these they had formerly served their Master in, before this revolution in the Church: As we judge the former relations to particular flocks (over which the Holy Ghost, and not the State, had made them overseers) to be yet in force, and not dissolved by all the violence used against us; so we think our approbation of this indulgence, would not only justify the unjust usurpation, and violence in casting them out; but likwise would have made void the former, and yet standing relation to these respective congregations, in which we darre have no hand, but in the way Christ hath appointed, and was formerly used in this Church; seing it will, no question, both strengthen the Magistrat, in his unjust encroachments on the Government of the Church, and be a practical acknowledgement of him, in all he hath done in this mater. (3.) By one clause in the 2. *act of indulgence*, appeals are allowed and authorized from the indulged to the Prelats Courts; which does subject, and directly subordinat them to these, in the exercise of government and discipline, which is known, to be contrare to our Covenanted and well grounded principles. The truth is, we look on this, with other particulars in that *indulgence*, as a device framed of purpose, for gaining all these ends and intents upon us, which by violence hath been formerly designed against us, for establishing of *Prelacy* and *Erastianisme*. (4.) As

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ſome of the Rules are impracticable, ſo others of them do not a little reflect upon the practiſes of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, recorded by the Evangeliſts, who preached in houſes and fields. If we underſtand our Chriſtian profeſſion aright, we muſt take ourſelves bound by many commands and precepts in the word of God, to imitat Chriſt and his Apoſtles, in their performances of the duties of Religion and righteouſneſs, which are of purpoſe related in the Scripturs for this effect. Do we not find from theſe ſacred records, Chriſt and his Apoſtles preaching in houſes and fields, as occaſions offered, never declining to teach and inſtruct the people in theſe, as the preſent exigence required, although they had the opportunity of and acceſſe to the Synagogues, which is denyed us, as to the places allowed for publict worship? Do not theſe practices of Chriſt and his Apoſtles ſay that, as preaching in houſes and fields, is in it ſelf no ſinne but lawful; (except we reſolve to make Chriſt a tranſgreſſour) ſo in the like caſes, and under the like calls, we are bound to do in this, as Chriſt did before us; who can get this shuned?

Amongſt the many deſignes aimed at, in this *indulgence*, and in part obtained by it; we know the deviding and breaking of our party, was a principal one; which at firſt actuated, and ſet on foot this device amongſt us; but, we hope, without the fruit our adverſaries exſpected to have reaped thereby, to the advantage of their cauſe: for, whatever difference there hath been, or yet is amongſt us, in our practice, in relation to the *indulgence*, we are all agreed in the preceeding exceptions againſt it; and if there had been acceſſe for repreſenting the ſame to our

Rulers,

Rulers, your unanimity and concord in these had been more discovered, and made known to the world, then it is. There is no change with us of our known and professed judgment, about the Government of the Church, in its true distinction from, and independence on the Magistrat, as is afterward expressed. What ever was our perswasion in this, represented to the world in our publick confession of faith, we yet, throw the grace of God, resolve to cleave to: having never seen or heard of any thing, in all the times that have gone over our heads, to cause us alter our apprehensions of this mater in the least. Some (who take hold of all occasions to reproach us) are pleased to represent some their acceptance of this indulgence, as contradictory to, and inconsistant with our former professed principles anent Church Government: yet any that considers what was shortly hinted at, to the Councel, at the receiving of this indulgence; and what was more largely declared by them to the congregations, at their first entry, will be sufficiently convinced of our constant adherence to our former principles; which by this acceptance is not at all changed. It is expected from the lovers of our righteous cause, that nothing shall be done by them, toward the furtherance of the evil intents of this indulgence; but rather an endeavour to counteract and ineffectuat them; that our opposites may have no benefite therefrom, to the prejudice of the interests of Christ, for which we contend.

SECT. VI.

The nature of Church Government, *as distinct from and independent upon Magistracy, explained.*

HAving proceeded thus far, and dispatched the first three things, we proposed to speak to, in the beginning. we shall now enter on the last, the *Supremacy Ecclesiastical*, that is now by law annexed to the crown, established in his majesties person and successours, and sensed by law and practice. Let none wonder, we take this ticklish subject into consideration, and dar adventure, to give an accompt of our thoughts of the same, to the world; for we solemnly professe, that on the exacteſt enquiry and search, that we have been able to make about this mater; we find it, as diametrically opposite to our true Covenanted principles, as Prelacy; and in its effects, we fear shall prove as destructive to the Church, and work of Reformation, as any thing that appeared on the field against it: Times past and present speak much to this, but the future will say more: the storme that this *Supremacy* threatens to this Church and nation, is such, that it is the part of all that wish well to *Zion* to pray instantly day and night, that it may be graciously averted. The truth is, as we look upon it, as an high corruption in it self tending to the subversion of the Churches concerns, in doctrine, worship, and Government; so it lies at the bottome of our non-conformity to the law, in Church maters, and is not only one, but a maine reason, why we cannot

cannot joyne in Church assemblies, especially for Government; which thereby, in our apprehensions, are made nullities. That our procedour in speaking to this, may be distinct and clear to all, we shall observe this method. 1. We shall consider & speak to the Government of the Church, and shew what it truly is. 2. We shall prove its distinction from, & independency on the civil Government. And 3. Shew how far this Government of the Church is by law lodged in, and exercised by our Rulers, contrare to Scripture and the practice of the Church, till these hundered years past.

For more light to the whole, we shall premise these preliminary considerations or propositions, which, we think, will not readily be denied by any. 1. *Propos.* it is out of our rode, and inconsistent with our intended brevity, to insist on the tearms *GOVERNMENT & CHURCH*, & what is usually signified by them; these we leave to the Criticks and all that write on this subject: but all are agreed in this, that *GOVERNMENT* is a tearme importing power and authority; which is nothing els, but a right to rule others, and an obligation on these invested therewith to use the same, for attaining the ends of Government: So that Government makes its acts due & valide in the person, or persons cloathed with it; & bindes them to all these acts, means & wayes, by which Government is enabled to reach its ends. 2. *Propos.* All created power & authority is originall in God, as the & first cheif cause thereof, & derived from him, as the universal Supreme Monarch, and Governour of all in heaven or earth; hence it necessarly followes, that, as the power that cannot prove its

descent from God, is not to be admited; so all just powers are directly subordinat to him as the universal head of all. 3. *Propos.* that the Church of Christ, not being founded in nature, but on supernatural revelations, her Government must wholly depend upon & flow from it, in these things where it differs from other Governments; so that the *All* of this Government is by positive institution and warrant from God supernaturally revealed. 4. *Propos.* That Christ Jesus, as Mediator, being made the head of the Church under God; and thereby her Government fountained in him: all powers in the Church must be derived from, and subordinat to him, as the Supream. 5. *Propos.* Beside the invisible and internal Government, that Christ Jesus exerciseth by his Spirit, on the souls and consciences of his people, (that consists in the inward light and power of his Spirit guiding and enabling them to that obedience, he requires of them in his word;) there is likwise a true visible Government of the Church, institute by him, and visibly exercised in her, in his name, as her Supream. 6. *Propos.* The Government of the Church (as shall be proved afterwards) is not properly, and *in linea directa* subordinat to the Magistrat, for 1. It hath its derivation from another fountaine, Christ Jesus; who being the Churches Supream head and governour, all power in her must come from and depend on him. 2. The Magistrat cannot take away, nor change the Government of the Church, which he may do in Governments and powers subordinat to him: yea, he cannot impede its exercise, in these intrusted with it; seing they are under obligations for it, antecedent & superiour to these of the Magistrat.

7. *Propos.*

7. *Propos.* That the holy Scriptures, being the word and law of Christ, as King of his Church, must be the instrument and rule of the Churches Government, according to which she ought to be ruled, not only in these acts of faith and obedience in the inner man, but also in the outward. 8. *Propos.* Although powers specifically distinct be not subordinat to one another; yet there may be and is a mutual subordination of persons, invested with these powers, so as the persons are in different respects superiour and inferiour to one another; as *Jesse* was to *David* (supposing him to live in his son *Davids* reigne;) which subordination of persons does not take away the destinction of these powers; nor the mutual subjection, the persons owe to one another: hence we assert, that as Magistracy does not destroy the Ministry, nor loose the persons cloathed therewith, from the subjection they owe, as Christians, to Ministers, in the right exercise of their Ministery; so neither does the Ministery destroy Magistracy, nor untye Ministers, as subjects, from that subjection and obedience due to Magistrats from their subjects; Ministers are bound to this as much as any. 9. *Propos.* As in all Governments, there are somethings that is intrinsick (although visible) wherein its nature and specifick essence does consist, and somethings accidental and separable from it, that belongs not to its *esse*, but *BENE ESSE*; so there are in the visible Government of the Church, somethings essential & intrinsick, (of which afterward) and somethings accidental and extrinsick, without which it can subsist, even in its exercise. 10. *Propos.* These things, in and about which, the Government of the

Church is conversant, are of diverse sorts; some are purely spiritual, as the Word, Ministery, Sacraments, and all Ordinances of divine appointment; Others are of a mixt nature, partly spiritual & partly civil, as the necessary circumstances and mods of worship and Government; which, although civil in their own nature, and common to other actions, yet partly by reason of the general divine appointments, impowering the Church to dispose and order these; partly by reason of their necessary connection with things purely spiritual, are truely Ecclesiastick, and become a part of the object of the proper power of Church Government, called by all Divines *DIATACTICK*: Some are properly & purely civil, in their owne nature and immediat ends; as Churches, Stipends, Manses, Glybs, &c. which, although they be by general precepts secured to the Church, and belonging to her; yet they are formally civil, and come directly under the Magistrates power, as other civil rights and proprieties do, about which he does execute the judgment of truth & peace.

11. *Propos.* It is to be adverted, that there is a twofold subordination of powers in Government; one *in LINEA DIRECTA*; and another *in LINEA OBLIQUA*: in the *first* subordination, the power subordinated is derived from, and comprehended in the Supream, and may be impeded, suspended or regulated in its exercise, yea totally dissolved by it; and when exercised, it is in the name and authority of the Supream, and wholly dependant, in its regulation, on it; so that both the power as such, the person intrusted therewith, and its exercise, is subjected to the Supream. In the *second* kind of subordination, the

the ſubordinated power, or rather the perſon in its exerciſe, is only the object of ſome acts of another power; but the power is not derived from it, nor *JURE*, impedible or regulable by it: It is in this laſt ſort of ſubordination, that Magiſtrats and Miniſters are ſubordinated to one another, without all ſubordination of the powers, in their exerciſe; for as Magiſtrats may, yea ſhould command Miniſters, when negligent, to the duties of their function; ſo Miniſters ought, in Chriſts name, to command Chriſtian Magiſtrats to do the duties belonging to their office; and to rebuke them authoritatively, when found acting contrare thereto. 12. *Propoſ.* Theſe ſubjected to created powers, whether Magiſtratical or Miniſterial, being under the ſupream, abſolute and univerſal Soveraignity of God, have a power of judgment and diſcretion granted to them, for cognoſcing on the commands of their ſuperiours, as to their juſtice or injuſtice, or their conſiſtency with, or repugnancy to the commands of God; by which they are to walk in giving or not giving obedience to their ſuperiours.

The way being thus paved, our next work is, to ſhew, what we judge to be the Government of the viſible Church, which we ſhall do in theſe Concluſions. *Concluſ.* 1. The Government of the viſible Church largely conſidered, is either Supream or Subordinat: to the Supream belongs the legiſlative power, as the making and enacting of lawes, inſtituting of ordinances, appointing and impowering of officers; and to be the fountaine of all power in the Church. This we aſſert to be only in Chriſt Jeſus; and viſible in his word, ordinances, officers, and the

conveyance of all Church power: in this, none share with him either Magistrats or Ministers. *Conclus.* 2. The subordinat power of Government in the Church, is in her officers, that Christ hath appointed and called thereto; which power, is only and immediatly from Christ, and exercised in his name, over all in the Church, which distinction of Church Government makes not different Governments in the head and members; it being one and the same Government, truly Monarchical, not Aristocratical, nor Democratical. *Concl.* 3. This derived and subordinat power in Church officers, when considered with respect to its mater, in and about which it is exercèd, is diverse: Schoolmen and Divines distinguish it, into the *power* of *Order* & *Jurisdiction*; but for explications sake, and avoiding of all ambiguity, we shall consider it, in the variety of its objects or mater; and its divers acts about the same.

As (1.) To it belongs the dispensing of the ordinances of worship, in the publict assemblies of the Church, in preaching of the word, praying to (as the mouth of the assembly) and praising of God: in these they act, as the Authorized servants of Christ, in performing and directing of the worship of God in the Church. (2.) The convocating of the Assemblies of the Church, for these divine and holy exercises; on which all in the Church are bound by divine precepts to attend, as the institute means of worship, conversion, and edification. (3.) The receiving, ordering, and distributing of the Charitable contributions of the Church, for maintaining of the poor, and doing of other pious works. (4. Trying,

ing, receiving, and admiting of members into the Church, confirming and ſealing of the ſame by Baptiſme. (5.) Adminiſtring the great ordinance of the Lords ſupper, to the worthy and obedient, conforme to the inſtitution of it in the word. (6.) Ejecting and excluding the impenitent and obſtinatly ſcandalous (after due trial and conviction) whether in doctrine or manners, from the Sacraments, and Comunion with the Church in theſe. (7.) Trying, calling, and ordaning of perſons fitted for and willing to engadge in the Miniſtery; according to the rules of the word. (8.) Depoſing and exautorating of Miniſters from the Miniſtery, who, by hereſy or ſcandals, declare themſelves unworthy of, and unfit for the ſame. (9.) Trying, and cenſuring of ſcandals, in perſons found guilty of them (after due conviction) for their recovery, and keeping of the Church pure. (10.) Aſſociating into ſtated & fixed meetings, for carrying on, and doing of the former and ſubſequent work, whether more general or particular, in their due and allowed ſubordination. (11.) Trying and judging of doctrines, whether ſound or heretical, according to the rule of the word of Chriſt, and cenſuring of perſons found unſound in the faith. (12.) Diſpoſing & ordering the neceſſary circumſtances of worship and Government, for decency and order, and the avoiding of confuſion. (13.) Reſolving of doubts and caſes of conſcience, incident to the Church, on any occaſion or emergent. (14.) Indicting of dayes of publict ſolemne faſts and humiliation, or of thankſgiving, as the diſpenſations of judgment and mercy call to the ſame, &c.

Concluſ. 4. This Government of the Church,

as it is in the hands of Church officers, and exercised by them, is purely Ministerial, without all dominion in them, and only *executive* in applying the will of Christ to the members of the Church, as they are found conform or disconform to the same. *Concl.* 5. This subordinat power in Church officers is only *declarative* and *nuncupative*, and not properly *decisive*; they have not power to determine what shall be true or false doctrine, sin or duty; and what censure shall be inflicted on persons heretical or scandalous; but only to declare and apply the will of Christ, and what he hath determined anent these in his word. This power suppons its object, and does not make it. *Concl.* 6. It is wholly limited, regulated by, and restricted to the word and law of Christ, as its basis and rule, beyond which it cannot go; and if it do, its acts are nullities and not obligatory on any. *Concl.* 7. It is purely spiritual, in its mater, manner and ends; and not at all civil: it essentially respects the inner man, and wholly labours (in the wayes appointed) the saving, edifying and perfecting of it. *Concl.* 8. This power is not properly *coercive*, *coactive*, and *compulsive*; but only *exclusive*: that is, if it be not obeyed by them, about whom it is exerced, it does debarre them from, and deny them the benefits, that are offered to all, and promised to the obedient. *Concl.* 9. This power, in the hands of the Church officers, is truly Christs, and when acted in his name, conforme to his lawes, is the exercise of his Supream dominion in and over the Church; By which he truly and visibly reigns over all in her: so that obedience to this power, is obedience to Christ, as King of his Church; and the contrare is high rebellion against him. *Concl.*

10. Although this power be only *Ministerial*, and *declarative* of the will of Christ; yet it is *authoritative*, and binding on all the Church, without exception of persons; and that on a double account, *first* on the account of divine commands enjoyning submission and obedience to its exercise, in the persons of those invested therewith; and also on the account of its respect to, and derivation from Christ, whose power and ordinance it is; and whom, in its exercise, it doeth represent to all. *Concl.* 11. This power is exercised, either singly & apart by every officer (according to the nature & measure of their power;) or in conjunction with one another, conforme to the precepts of the word, and practises of the Church in Scripture times. Although every officer of the Church in their several orders, have the whole power belonging *intrinsice* to it; yet there are some acts thereof, they cannot exerce, but in a conjunction with others, as ordaining of person for the Ministry, Trying and censuring of scandalous and heretical Professours or Ministers, &c. for which there must be fixed meetings of officers, general and particular. *Concl.* 12. The ordinar officers of the Church (the extraordinare being ceased) are of three orders, Teachers and Pastors; Ruling elders; and Deacons. These we finde to be of divine institution, and no others: Many others have been brought into, and obtruded on the Church, but all of humane, or rather of diabolical invention; as, alace, their effects have sadly made out to the Church of God, in former and present times. In every one of these divine orders, we finde no institute superiority, in the same order, of one above others; as a Pastor of Pastors; or an Elder

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of Elders; and a Deacon of Deacons: These who have assumed and exercised this superiority we cannot owne, as the Officers of Christ, nor subject to them, as such, till they prove their institution and mission from him; which yet they have not done. The outmost essey hath been for *Prelacy* or a *Bishop*, who is pleaded to be a Pastour of Pastours having the oversight of them and their flocks; but nothing attempted for making out the divine right of *Primats*, *Archbishops*, *Archpresbyters*, *Archdeacons*, &c.

This is that lowly and humble Government of the Church, that Christ hath institute in his word, and put in the hands of his Officers, commanding them to exercise and dispense the same to all in his house, under high paines: of which in the second place we assert these two. 1. That it is distinct and specifically different from the civil government of the Magistrat. And 2. That it is independant on it. These two conclusions we now undertake to prove, against the *Erastians* of our time, who assert, that when the Church comes to be embodyed with the Commonwealth, her Government becomes one with the Government of the State, and does not differ from it.

In opposition to these, we *affirme*, that when a Nation, State or Kingdom turnes Christian, in its Rulers and Subjects, the Government of the Church remaines specifically different and distinct from the Government of that State or Kingdome, as it was before its conversion to Christianity. The reasons perswading us of this, are 1. The Government of the Kingdome, that is not of this world, is distinct and different from the Government of the Kingdomes

domes that are of this world? But so it is, that the Government of the Church is the Government of a Kingdome, that is not of this world. Therefore the Government of the Church is distinct and different from the Government of the civil Magistrat, that is, the Government of Kingdomes that are of this world. This Argument leans on these three. 1. That the Church is a Kingdome, 2. That she hath a Government; And 3. That she is not of this world, although in it. All which are beyond dispute clear from the Scriptures. All that our adversaries say to this, is, that the visible Church of Christ, is not properly, but metaphorically called a Kingdome: But how evident is the contrare? for is not Christ Jesus the Churches visible Head and King? Is she not ruled by his visible Lawes, Ordinances and Officers, that are properly and truely such? and are not all these from above, and not of this world?

Argum. 2. That Government whose supream Head, Lawes, Ordinances and Officers are specifically different from the Head, Lawes, Ordinances, and Officers of the civil Magistrat, must be distinct from it: But so it is that the head, lawes, ordinances and Officers of the Church are distinct from the lawes, &c. of the civil Magistrat: Therefore, &c. The reason of the *first proposition* is clear; for that which makes one Government differ from another, is different heads, lawes, Ordinances & Officers: where these are either numerically or specifically different, the Government is different accordingly: it being comprehended in all these: but that the supream head, laws, ordinances, and Officers of the Church are specifically different, from these of the civil Government

vernment, who will deny it, that professes himself a Christian? *Obj.* But all these come under the inspection of the Magistrat, when he turns Christian. *Ans.* 1. Either these continue in the Church, under the Magistrats Government, what they were before, or they do not: if they do, the Argument holds, and proves the Government of the Church, to be distinct from that of the Magistrats, when Christian. If they do not continue, we ask from whence comes this alteration, and how will they prove it? Nothing here from our adversaries, but *Altum silentium*, or *nugæ*, destitute of all reason. But, 2. The tearm *INSPECTION*, or *OVERSIGHT*, is ambiguous; if by it we mean the countenancing, protecting, and encouraging of this Government of the Church, we yeeld it: but what sayes that to the confounding of the Governments, or making the Government of the Church, the Magistrats: if by inspection we understand, the devolving of the Government of the Church on the Magistrat, as the fountaine of it; the ordering and disposing of its exercise, the changing thereof at pleasure, in whole or in part: this we deny, and long have we looked for proofe; but have hitherto met with none.

Arg. 3. The Government of the Church formerly delineated is incompatible with the civil Magistrats; therefore it is distinct from his Government. We hope, none will refuse this consequence. The *antecedent* is thus proven. (1.) The subordinat Government of the Church is purely *Ministerial*, not *dominative* or *imperial*; it is only *declarative*, and not *decisive*, not *coactive* and *compulsive*; it is exercised in Christs Name, and in his stead, and is the representative

sentative of his special presence in his Church: these are incompatible with the Government of the Magistrat, whose power is Supream, Magisterial, and Imperial, coactive and compulsive; and exercised in his owne name. &c. (2.) The Magistrat cannot, yea may not exercise the Government of the Church, being disenabled thereto, by the commands and institutions of Christ, who hath laid the burden thereof on others, and not on him. The most grant, the Magistrat himself may not exercise some parts of this Government, as ordaining of persons for the Ministery, excommunicating, &c. and why he may do other parts and acts belonging to it, and not these, We desire proofe: all our antagonists arguments in this conclude for the whole. *Obj.* But some Magistrats have exercised both powers, as *Moses*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Solomon*, &c. *Ans.* These were both Magistrats and Prophets; and it is evident from the Scripture, that what they did either in constituting or in exercising of the Government of the Church, they did it as Prophets, and not as Magistrats: we find Magistrats, that were not Prophets, attempting it, & reprehended for so doing, as *Saul*, *Uzziah*: which says, that it did not belong to their Magistratical Office.

Arg. 4. That Goverment that is founded upon and regulated by another rule and instrument, then the law of the civil Magistrat, is distinct from his Government: But the Government of the Church is founded upon, and ruled by another law or rule, then the Magistrats; the law and word of Christ: therefore, &c. the *first proposition* is clear, for the Government of the Magistrat does flow from and is regulated

lated by his owne lawes, of which he is the sole fountaine: The *second*, we suppose, is undenyable among Christians, who acknowledge the Scriptures for a rule of Doctrine, Worship and Government to the Church of Christ. *Obj.* But there are somethings necessare to the Government of the Church, not contained in the Scriptures? *Ans.* This we deny. For 1. What the Scriptures containe, anent the Government of the Church (if reduced to practice) is able to attaine its ends, and more is not necessary: Let the Church have these, and the work will be done: we make & feigne necessities, but no more is necessar to the ends of the Church Government, then what is determined by the Scriptures anent it. (2.) The ability of the Churches Government, for reaching its ends, lyes not in the innate sufficiency of its instituted means; but in the Spirit of Christ, working with, in, and by them; by which low, weak and despicable wayes, Christ carries on the salvation of his people, that the excellency of the power may be of him, and not of us. (3.) The Scriptures being a full and perfect rule for all maters of faith and obedience, what it containes of, and anent the Government of the Church, must be perfect and sufficient: sure we are, the Churches Government is a good work, and its exercise, acts of obedience to Christ Jesus; anent which it is said 1. *Tim.* 3. The Scripturs are able to make the Man of God perfect, throughly furnished to every good work. (4.) We enquire, when the Church is without a Christian Magistrat, and under the feet of a heathenish persecuting one (in which case our opposits grant her a Government distinct from, and independent on the Magistrat) whether

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the Government exercised in her, be able to attaine its ends. If it be (as the experience of the Church in this case puts beyond doubt) why may it not do the same, under a Christian Magistrat?

Arg. 5. That Goverement that is exercised in the name of another distinct Supream Head, besides the Magistrat, is distinct from the Government of the civil Magistrat. But the Government of the Church is exerced in the name and authority of another Supream head, not subordinat to the Magistrat. Therefore, &c. What can be said to the *first proposition*, we understand not; for all Governments one with, and subordinat to the Magistrat, are exercised in his name and authority: But this Government of the Church is exercised in her, in the name of Christ Jesus, by his Officers, as is clear from the word.

Arg. 6. The designations, denominations and relations, in and with which the Church is represented in the Scriptures, do also confirme this truth; she is called the *Body of Christ*, the *Kingdome of Heaven*, the *City of God*, the *House of the living God*, *the new Jeruſalem*. As all these do necessarily import a Government in the Church; so they insinuat the same to be different from all other Governments: Which we may mould into this Argument. That society which is the body of Christ, &c. must have a Government distinct from the Government of the civil Magistrat: But the Church is that society, that is only the body of Christ, &c. Therefore, &c. *Obj.* But all these are said only of the invisible Church? *Anſ.* But the contrare is clear from those Scriptures, where these Epithets are given to the Church, 1. Cor. 12. 1, Tim. 3. 15.

Arg. 7. That Government whose immediat and essential ends are specifically different, from the immediat and essential ends of the Magistrats Government, is distinct from the Government of the Magistrat: But here it is so: the essential & immediat ends of Church Government, are different from the essential & immediat end of Magistracy; as will be clear to any that compares them together; The ends of Church Government are the saveing of the soule, the conversion and edification of sinners, &c. The ends of Magistracy, are, the outward publict peace and prosperity of the common wealth, the execution of justice in the maintaining and preserving of propriety, &c. with these the Churches government does not medle, nor intend them, of it self. *Obj.* The Magistrat ought to intend, and endeavour the spiritual happinesse and wellfare of his subjects? *Ans.* We grant this, but as all others ought to do it; for every one in their station are bound to designe and labour the eternal salvation of these under their charge; this being a common end, that all Christians, in their severall capacities, should seek after, in their love to one another: the *first propostion* is evident, because the specificall distinction betwixt powers, habits and acts, is taken from their Objects and immediat proper ends; Where these differ, they are by all Philosophers constitute into different species's.

In the next place we *assert*. That as the government of the Church does specifically differ from the government of the Magistrat; so it is independant thereon, and not directly subordinat thereto. A truth (how much soever it be decryed) we are not shamed of, nor affrayed to profess & maintaine: and

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whosoever will lay aside prejudice and earthly interests, and consider these reasons with us, will be forced to acknowledge it.

Arg. 1. The Magistrat is not the fountaine of Church power; it hath not its derivation from him; and therefore is not directly subordinat to him: The consequence is founded on this truth, granted by all Lawyers and Divines, that all power directly subordinat to, and dependant on the Magistrat, is derived from him as the fountaine thereof: the *antecedent* we prove thus. (1.) The Magistrat as a Magistrat is not a member of the Church, but as a Professor of Christianity, which intitles others to this priviledge, as much as him; Therefore he cannot be the fountaine of Church power as such; for whoever is the fountaine of power to any society, is a member, yea the noblest member of it; *Obj.* But as a christian Magistrat he is a member of the Church? *Ans.* 1. What then? will this prove him to be the fountaine of Church power? so might Christian Husbands, Parents, &c. argue as justly for this clame: the truth is, he being only a member of the Church, as a Christian, and not as a Magistrat, Magistracy gives him no more priviledge, then any other power, civil or natural, when the person turnes Christian; for the benefite of membership goes on grounds and reasons common to all Christians, and containes no speciality to one more then to another. If any think Magistracy does, they shall do well to prove it, which none hath yet offered to do. 2. If men understood well, what it is to be a Christian, a disciple and member of Christ's Church, they would quickly see its inconsistency with the said profession;

does not persons, turning Christians, professe subjection to Christ, his Lawes, Ordinances and Servants? which is repugnant to the fountaine of the Church power. (2.) He may not exercise Church power; Therefore is not the fountaine of it: all yeeld, that these who are the fountaine of power to others may exercise it themselves, it being in them, and others acting, as their delegates, in its exercise: that the Magistrat may not exercise Church power, is clear; for Church power, being by positive institution from Christ, they that exercise it must have a commission from him. which none hath produced for the Magistrat: *Erastus* asserteth it, but without all proofe, of which it is so destitute, that the most of his followers have left him in this assertion.

Arg. 2. All Church power is lodged in and immediatly descended from Christ Jesus, as the Supream Head and Ruler of the Church, and Superiour to the Magistrat: Therefore it is not subordinat to the Magistrat: The reason of the consequence is clear, for it is a repugnancy in a power to be immediatly subordinat to two Supream powers, in one and the same respects; especially where the one is superiour to the other: The *antecedent* is manifest, for Christ is only head of the Church; all power in her is institute by him; exerced in his name; astricted to, and regulated by his word; and accomptable to him. All notes of power immediatly descended from him. *Obj.* But the Christian Magistrat, as Christs substitute and vicegerent, is under him, the neareſt and immediat fountaine of Church power; for *subordinata non pugnant?* *Anſ.* Long hath the *Pope* of *Rome* contended for this, and on grounds more plausible, then

these

theſe, on which the Magiſtrat goes. But Proteſtant Divines anſwer to the Papiſts on this head, furnish us with irrefragable anſwers to the Magiſtrats clame; which we deſire our adverſaries would conſider & anſwer at their own leasure: we finde not the Magiſtrat inrolled among the officers of the Church, far leſſe ſubſtitute for Chriſts vicegerent; if there be any Scripture for this, bring it forth? We know of none as yet alledged by our adverſaries; but what will plead as ſtrongly, for the heathenish Magiſtrat, as for the Chriſtian: And if they do, what traitours were the Apoſtles, Miniſters and Chriſtians of the primitive times, that did not acknowledge the heathenish Magiſtrates for their head in the Church; but reſiſted and diſobeyed their lawes and edicts againſt them, for crying up of another King, in the maters of their Chriſtian Profeſſion.

Arg. 3. All Church power was inſtitute by Chriſt, in an immediat ſubordination to himſelf; without any acknowledgment of, or dependance on the Magiſtrat: Therefore it is not dependant upon, nor ſubordinat to him: The *antecedent* is clear from the Hiſtory of the New Teſtament, where we find, that Chriſt moulded and conſtituted the Church by his Apoſtles, and furnished her with a Government and officers, to be exerciſed in his name; and all this he did without conſulting, or adviſing with the Magiſtrat, or ſuſpending of her upon him; the Magiſtrat all this time reſiſting & ſetting himſelf, for crushing of this Church & Kingdome of Chriſt; which he erected in the midſt of their Kingdomes, making uſe of their rage and violence to eſtablish and propagat it, for ſome Hundreds of years. All this is ſo evident, that

our adversaries are not able to refuse it; what is there then to hinder the consequence, that we draw from this deed of Christ? If our opposites in this mater could shew us, that the Church had no government institute by Christ; nor exercised any, all the time that the Magistrat thus opposed himself to her; or that Christ had declared his will, that she should be subjected to the Magistrat in her Government, when he should become Christian; they would soon end this strife: but nothing can we learne from them to this purpose.

Arg. 4. As this Government was institute by Christ and his Apostles; so it was exerced in his name in the Church, without dependance on the Magistrat, till *Constantine* the great's time; and from thence downe ward, till the Reformation of Religion brack up in *Germanie*: till which time, it was never questioned by any, until *Erastus* the Physician arose, who laboured not only to subject the Church to the Magistrat, in all her concearnes as such; but denied all Government to her by divine institution, that is distinct from the Government of the Magistrat; contrare to full and clear Scripture, which he most insolently and wickedly endeavours to wrest & pervert. So then if the Government of the Church was in Scripture times, and downwards, till within these hundered years, exercised without dependance on the Magistrat, both heathenish and Christian; then it must yet be independant on, and not directly subordinat to him. Here our Antagonists are put to strange shifts: The first three hundred years, they must grant; and may we not take this for a yeelding of the cause? Scripture and antiquity hath been held for a sufficient plea, for maters of doctrine and practice

ctise: debates in Polemical divinity hath run on these two heads; and whoever made out their assertions from these, have been esteemed to carry the cause: all that our adversaries have to say to this, are these two. 1. That the Government exercised in the Church was not by divine institution and precepts; but by confederation of Churches and officers. To this we *reply*. 1. If the Epistles to *Timothy*, to the seven Churches in *Asia*. *Revel*. 2. and 3. *Chapters*; with other places of Scripture, used by our Divines, in this mater, prove not the contrary, they have no sense: We beg of our adversaries, they will, for saving us a labour, answer Mr. *Gillespies* Arguments from Scripture, in the second part of his *Aarons Rod blossoming*. 2. Belids they are not able to make out what they assert, to wit, that the Church did exercise her Government in these times, by confederation and mutual consent; and not by institution and command: for as there is nothing in Scripture and pure antiquity for this; So the Churches being gathered and constitute by the Apostles, we presume, they continued in the constitutions, which the Apostles left, according to the precepts and rules they gave them; to which we find, in the word and Church History, their practice conforme. When the persecutions of the Church ceased, upon the Magistrats turning Christian, we find her continuing, in the exercise of the former Government, (but with the addition of some corruptions, which grew to a sad hight afterwards, throw the excessive munificence & bounty of *Constantine* the great, the first Christian Emperour) and exercising the same, as formerly; as is clear from History; that speaks of these times. Here our adversaries speak

of ſome inſtances of the power, the Magiſtrat did exerce in the Church; as convocating of Synods, labouring in the peace of the Church, ſorely rent at ſome times, through ſad hereſies and ſchiſms; And that ſaying of *Conſtantines* repeated by them, *ad nauſeam: vos eſtis Epiſcopi ad intra, Ego ad extra.* But how is our Antagoniſts concluſion made out by all theſe? will it follow, that becaus the Magiſtrat did convocat Synods, its Government is derived from, & ſubordinat to him? No wayes, for (1.) Albeit the Magiſtrat have a power to convocat the officers of the Church, anent maters relating to his owne conſcience and duty, whether about Church or State; yet this is not privative of the Churches power to convocat her owne aſſemblies, either for worship or government; as we find she did in the primitive times, not only without but againſt his conſent; yea, when the Magiſtrat became Chriſtian, she retained and exerciſed this power in aſſembling into ſeveral Synods, without the Magiſtrat. It is true, we do not read of general Synods aſſembled, after this, but by the Magiſtrat, till the *Pope* of *Rome*, claimed this power, and uſurped therein on the Church and Magiſtrat, as he did in all other things, but the vaſtneſs of the Empire, and large extent of the Church (which exceeded its bounds) made this in point of prudence neceſſare, for without the Magiſtrat, it could not eaſily be done. But (2.) Convocating of others, is not alwayes, in its ſelf, an infallible ſigne of a ſuperiour power and dominion over judicatories convocated; as in limited Monarchies, and not abſolute, where the Supream power is lodged in the King and States of the Kingdom; although the King

King have the power of convecning the States; yet they share with him, in the legislative and executive power, while in being: therefore the illation is bad and not concludent. (4.) What imaginable advantage can accrew, to our adversaries assertion, by that saying of *Constantines*, formerly cited? We grant the Magistrat is the overseer of things without the Church; but this will not prove, that the government of the Church, is in and from his hands, and subordinat to him; they must first make it appear by good reason, that her Government is *ad extra*, which they have not yet done, nor never will; for although it be visible in its institution and exercise; yet it is as intrinsinck to, and within her, as her doctrine and worship; which by this sence, will be as much derived from and subjected to the Magistrat, as her Government; seing the one is as visible in its dispensation, as the other.

Arg. 5. The Magistrat may not, yea cannot *jure* impede and hinder the exercise of the Churches government: therefore it is not derived from, nor subjected to him: the reason of this consequence is, what ever power is derived from the Magistrat, and subordinated directly to him, he may suspend, hinder its exercise, yea he may totally remove and annihilat it: this is yeelded by all, and taken for a sure Maxime in Politicks: but the Magistrat may not do this, in the Government of the Church; and that becaus it is of divine institution, and the persons intrusted with, and called to its exercise, are under the obligations of divine precepts and commands for it, which the Magistrat cannot hinder, nor by any deed or command of his, mak: void. These that deny

this divine institution of Church Government, we refer to the forecited book; where it is strongly pleaded & made out from clear and expreis Scriptures in the New Testament. Likwise as he cannot impede its exercise, so he may not nullify its sentences, by himself, which he may do in the sentences passed by all powers, derived from and subordinat to himself.

Arg. 6. The Christian Magistrat, is by vertue of his Christian Profession, bound to subject himself to the acts & exercise of Church Government, in the hand of Church Officers; and is as much obleidged to yeeld thereto, as any other: Therefore Church power is not directly subordinat to him. The antecedent is clear; for all are commanded submission and obedience to Church Officers, in the exercise of their power, in watching, overseeing, and ruleing of the Church *Heb.* 13. 7, 17. 10 which exercise of their power, we finde Magistrats in the word submitting, as UZZIA, who was by the priests, conforme to the law, separated and secluded from the holy things of God, and communion with the Church in these; yea, it is given for the maine cause of all that heavy wrath and judgment, that came on *Zedekiah* 2. *Chron.* 36. 12. that he humbled not himself before *Jeremiah*, the Prophet, speaking the word of the Lord to him. *Obj.* But this subjection in Magistrats to Church Officers, is properly to Christ, and not to them; *Ans.* we confess, the subjection is primarily and cheifly to Christ Jesus, whom such, in the exercise of their Office, doe represent; yet the subjection is to them too, whom all, without exception of any in the Church, are commanded to receive, hear and obey: So that in the dispensation of holy things, they are

superiour

ſuperiour to all in the Church, Magiſtrats and others, as their conſtitut Rulers, Overſeers, Governours and Watch men, whom they ought to obey; when acting in their Office, agreable to the law of Chriſt: which obedience is not *CATACHRESTICAL* or *ABUSIVE* (as *VIDELIUS* ſpeaks) in the Magiſtrat, but proper and really, a debt they owe to the Miniſters of the Goſpel diſpenſing holy things, as much as any other member of the Church; their obligation to it being of the ſame kinde and nature, with the obligation of others. If any think otherwayes, let them produce their reaſons and Scriptures.

2. If the fiery and zealous promotters of the Magiſtrats power, in and over the Church of God, did conſider the true and real prejudice they do to Magiſtrats, by exeeming them from that ſubjection, that they, with all others, owe to Church Officers, they would (if there be any ſenſe of Religion and its advantages remaining with men) hold their hand; and ſhould have little thanks from Magiſtrats, for their prepoſterous zeal, who, by their opinions in this mater, do really exclude Magiſtrats from the Communion of the Church, and the benefite of the ordinance of Church Government, which in its deſigne and effects is for ſaving of the ſoul, as well as all other ordinances. Other Arguments might be adduced, as the want of power in the Magiſtrat to alter and change the Government of the Church; or to nullify its juſt ſentences paſſed, &c.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

The ſinfulneſs of the Eccleſiaſtick Supreamacy *manifeſted.*

BUt judging theſe ſufficient to the conviction of the unprejudged; we come to the other part of our task, which is to ſhew, that this viſible intrinſick government of the Church is aſſumed by, and given to our Rulers, in the preſent ſtanding laws of the Kingdom; which we ſhall make out from the *acts of Parliament*; particularly *act of reſtitution. Parl.* 1. Seſſ. 2. *Act.* 1. *act anent the National Synod Parl.* 1. *Seſſ.* 3. *Act.* 4. *act againſt Conventicles Parl.* 2. *Seſſ.* 5. *act. againſt Keepers of Conventicles and withdrawers &c. Parl.* 2. *Seſſ.* 3. Act. 17. *act againſt unlawful ordinations Parl.* 2. *Seſſ.* 3. with others of the like nature. But, before we enter on the probation of this, it will be neceſſare, for clearing our way to it, to conſider a little two things, in the beginning of the narrative of the act of reſtitution, repeated in ſeveral acts: where, *firſt*, the Government of the Church is called the external Government of the ſame: the tearm, *EXTERNAL*, being Notourly ambiguous, ſhould have been explained, & all not left to gueſs at its meaning: *EXTERNAL* is by ſome oppoſed to the *internal inviſible Government of Chriſt* on the ſouls of his people; and ſo by it they underſtand, the viſible intrinſick Government of the viſible Church: that this is meant by the tearm *EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT*, in this and other acts, the following Arguments undertake to make out: but

ſome

some others oppose the terme *EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT*, to this intrinsick visible Government of the Church, formerly described and asserted to be distinct from, and independant on the Magistrat; and by it they do understand, these humane adjuncts and accidents, that are civil in themselves, and not made sacred by divine institution: some plead this to be the sense of these terms, in the acts of Parlt; but how groundlesly let our subsequent reasons determine. *Secondly*, It is there said, that the ordering and disposing of the external government of the Church belongs to the Crowne, &c. it is hard to sense this; for ordering and disposing, when done by persons in authority, is a part of government in it self; and if it be so, the Phrase is equivalent to this, the governing of the external government of the Church: which is a strange sort of speach, as if a government needed a government to governe it: What if this were said of the government of the government of the State? Would it not be reputed non-sense? But the truth is, all governments do necessarily imply a power to dispose and order all things relating to it, as a part of the same; & without which it were imperfect; and it is without dispute evident from the experience of the Church under heathenish Magistrats; that the government of the Church had this, which by this act is taken from her. *Next*, we ask, whether this ordering and diposing be an act of the Ecclesiastick or civil government? If it be of the Ecclesiastick, it is againe non-sense, at the best; and is as much as if it had been said, the Ecclesiastical governing of the Ecclesiastical government of the Church; a perfect tautology. But if it be an

be an act of the civil government; how comes it, that in this and other acts of Parliament, it is called the *Kings Ecclesiastical Government*, in oppoſition to the civil? *Obj.* It is only objectively ſo called. *Anſ.* Then it is properly and formally civil, the phraſe, objectively Eccleſiaſtical being *CATACHRESTICAL* and *ABUSIVE*; a very improper ſpeach; yea as improper, as if we ſhould call Church power or Government, in the hands of Church officers, objectively civil, or civil. *Thirdly*, In the laſt place we deſire to know, whether this ordering or diſpoſing of the Government of the Church be neceſſary, or not? If it be not neceſſary, why is the Church troubled with it? If it be, we ask againe, when it was exerciſed by the Church, whether it was an act of civil or Church Government? It could not be of the civil; for the Church had none under perſecuting Magiſtrats; if it was an act of the Eccleſiaſtical or Church Government; then it was purely and formally ſuch; and not truely civil, although exerciſed about things civil in their owne nature, and ſeing it was ſo, how comes it to be the Magiſtrats now? To any conſiderat and unbyaſſed reader, it will be manifeſt, that theſe words or expreſſions come from mindes, deſigning the enhanſing of the intrinſick viſible Government of the Church, and withall labouring to cover it; but all in vaine.

Now that the Eccleſiaſtical Government of the Church, formally and intrinſically ſuch, is aſſumed by, and given to the Magiſtrat, in the preſent ſtanding lawes, will be apparent to any that conſider theſe things, in the forecited *acts of Parliament*. (1.) That Church officers, in the exerciſe of Church government

vernment, in their Church assemblies or judicatories, are put in dependance upon, and subordinated to the King, as Supream to them therein: this makes the King the fountaine of Church power, & the Church officers to derive and hold their power of him; which makes our King the proper Head of the Church, & substituts him in Christs roome to her. (2.) The government of the Church, thus subjected to & dependant on the King as Supream, is, in the *act of restitution*, extended to and made to take in ordination, acts of discipline, inflicting of Church censures; yea to all causes and matters formally *Ecclesiastical*; to all, about which Church power is exerced, he is made the supream. (3.) All Church power and jurisdiction, as it was exercised in this Church (before the late introduction of prelacy) without this derivation from and subordination to the Magistrat, is rescinded and annulled; certainly in these times, the Magistrat had and did exercise a power about Church matters; as is to be seen in the laws then made in their behalf; but this does not now content, without this supremacy; which imports another power acclamed by the Magistrat now, that was not then. (4.) This *supremacy*, and (as it is called) *the Royal prerogative of the Crown*, is given for the maine reason of the change made in the Government of the Church, in overturning and casting out of the true government, that then was, and bringing in another in its stead, without the authority and concurrence of the Church: a fair opened doore, for bringing in the like alteration and change in doctrine and worship, when there is access to it. (5.) Prelacy by this act is restored, not only to the former height it was

it was at, and had attained by law and practice, before its last ejection out of this Church; but also to all that ever it was, even in the times of popery; which when considered in the constitution and priviledges it then had, was an humane Office founded on the Supremacy of the *Pope*; but now, by this law, on the Magistrat: which sayes, that although the persons be changed, yet the Supremacy is the same. (6.) In the act anent the *National Synod*, the nomination and election of persons, by whom the government of the Church is to be exercised, under the King, is asserted to be the Kings, by vertue of his royal prerogative and supremacy, in causes Ecclesiastical; so that the constitution of Church judicatories is made dependant upon him: a thing never heard of nor practised in this or any other Church, till of late. (7.) The right, being and constitution of the National Synod of this Church, is wholly dependant upon, and derived from this law; So as it is no Synod of this Church, that is not gathered, and constitute conforme to it; although a Synod in this Church should have all, that made Synods lawful, and their acts obligatory, in former times. (8.) The particular constitution of this National Synod, as to its members (which in this act are nominated and regulated thereby, for all future times) is determined for its times and places of meeting, and put wholly in the Kings hand, and asserted to be his right, by vertue of his Supremacy over this Church. It is no Synod that is not thus convocated. (9.) The maters to be handled, debated, and concluded in this Synod (a thing alwayes judged intrinsick to the Church) comes only from the King, & are to be pro-

pose

poſed from him, by the *Arch-prelat of Saint Andrews* and no other: a fearful reſtraining of the divine liberty of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, who may not ſpeak of maters of doctrine & manners, (although neceſſary for the times) contrare to the freedome, that is commanded them by their maſter, anent theſe. (10.) The King's, or his Commiſſioners preſence is made eſſential to theconſtitution, and of binding force to this nationall Synod: It is no Synod, although conſtitute after the paterne of Church Synods, in the primitive times; if it want this. (11.) No mater debated and concluded by the Majority of this Synod, is obligatory on this Church, and its members, if not approven and allowed by the King or his Commiſſioner. This ſuſpends the intrinſick obligation of Synods on the King; ſo that no canon, act or conſtitution, do binde the members of the Church, if he aſſent not: As this ſecures the Court, in their carnal liberties and ſinful wayes; ſo it ſhuts the door on all endeavours of reformatiou by the Church, when Princes are vicious. (12.) In the act aſſerting the Kings Supremacy Eccleſiaſtick, the King & his ſucceſſors are enabled and impowered to medle with all maters and meetings Eccleſiaſtick, which brings the doctrine and worship within his verge, and ſubjects the ſame to him, as much as the government. (13.) They are impowered to enact and emit conſtiturions, acts, and orders, anent maters and meetings Eccleſiaſtick, as they pleaſe and think fit, and are not, in the making of theſe, aſtricted to any rule, but their pleaſure, O *HORRENDUM*! (14.) All theſe acts and orders they may ſtatute, independant on the Church, Parliament, or any other, by their ſole au-

thority, never granted to any of his predeceſſours before. (15.) Theſe acts and conſtitutions inſert in the books of Councel, and duely published, are declared and made to be of full force and obligation to this Church and her members. No need of Synods here; which by this are wholly ſubverted. (16.) All former lawes, acts and clauſes of them, contrare to and inconſiſtent with this, are made void, caſſed, annulled; which takes away the Proteſtant Religion, the Word of God as the rule, the concurrence of the Church in the aſſiſtance of the conſtitutions Eccleſiaſtical, that was provided and ſecured by former acts of Parliament: a wide door for Popery. (17.) In the act againſt unlawful Ordinations (as they call them) the Ordination of perſons to the Miniſtry, by Miniſters of Chriſt Jeſus, that have not conformed to Prelacy, (which was held unqueſtionable & valid for its ſubſtance by all, till this late gang of Prelats aroſe, in which they are degenerat from their predeceſſours) is, by the ſole authority of the Magiſtrat, made void; and all Miniſterial acts, and Church benefites depending thereon, declared to be nul. An act that unchriſtians and condemns all the reformed Churches, making their Churches no Miniſterial political Churches, and all Ordinances, diſpenſed in them, nullities: which their practice at this time in *England* does confirme; while Romiſh Prieſts turning Proteſtants, are, without ordination, made capable, and advanced to Church places and preferments; of which the Proteſtant Miniſters of other Churches, conforming to Prelacy, are denied, till they be reordained. Other mediums contained in other acts of Parliaments, for fixing of the preceeding

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conclusions, we passe; having hinted at some of them above; judging these sufficient, for the conviction of the unintereſſed & unprejudged; who through the power of luſt and earthly intereſt, have not caſt off the light of the word, but keeps in ſubjection to it.

We ſhall in the laſt place anſwer ſome objections, in which, we have to do with two ſortes of perſons; *firſt*, the high flowne *Eraſtians* of our times, who will admit of no government in the Church, but that which is in and from the Magiſtrat; whoſe deſigne, (as is evident from the act aſſerting the Kings Supremacy) is, to take all Government out of the Churches hands; and to put it on the King & his Councel, to be only exerciſed by them: which, throw the diſlike of Prelacy, is not ſufficiently lamented, laid to heart, nor reſiſted by many, as its dangerous conſequences, to all the concerns of the Church, do require. Beſides theſe, there are, who, (upon what principle is not yet known,) think that the Supremacy, as it is now aſſerted by law, is not formally Eccleſiaſtical, but only objectively ſo; which is ſtrange: ſome of the objections of the firſt ſort, we have met with, as we went along the former heads; we know of no other, beſides theſe, of any conſiderable ſtrength, but one.

Obj. That the Magiſtrat being the keeper of both tables of the law; of the table of Religion, as well as of the table of Righteouſneſs; ought to have a care of Religion, and hath power given him to exerciſe it about the ſame? *Anſwer*, This being the *Achilles* of the *Eraſtians*, and *ſemi Eraſtians*; of *VIDELIUS* in particular; We ſhall returne theſe anſwers to it;

and shew it cannot bear their conclusion. 1. Whatever power the Christian Magistrat can clame by this, the heathenish Magistrat hath the same; he is by his Magistratical office constitute, *in actu primo*, a Keeper of both tables; as is evident from, *Rom.* 13: 1, 2. If he do not exercise it, it comes not from any defect of power in his office, or the institution of it; but from his blindness and unbeleef, which indispose him to answer his trust, and to do the work of his office; to which, upon the revelation of the Gospel, he is bound: and seing it is so, either the Church, in exercising of her Government independantly on heathenish Magistrats, usurped on his office & power; which the adversary dare no say: Or els the Christian Magistrat hath no more power in & over the Church, then the other had: and therefore the Church, in exercising her power under the Christian Magistrat, does not usurp upon him, more then on the other. 2. The Ministers of the Gospel are, by vertue of their office, Keepers of both tables of the law, of the table of Righteousness, as well as of the table of Religion: will it from thence follow, that they may medle with the Magistrats office, and assume its exercise; or that the same does depend on them? No wayes: and yet the consequence is as good in the one as in the other: by the same medium we shall prove Ministers, have as good right and power to manage the affairs of the State; as the Magistrat hath (in our adversaries sense) to manage the affairs of the Church. We know they will reject the consequence with disdaine, as to Ministers, and ask for our proofe, for which, we grant, they have just cause; so we deny the consequence as to the Magistrat, for

which

which they have not given us yet any colourable proofe; but dictator-like assert it. The truth is, every man in his capacity is a Keeper of both tables of the law; but in doing of it, is to hold within the compasse of his station, the nature, and limites of the power granted him; and is not to invade the office and power of others, nor the work proper thereto: as is evident from multitude of precepts in the Word of God. So if Ministers, notwithstanding their being Keepers of the tables of the law, may not invade the Magistrats office and power; So neither may Magistrats invade the Ministerial office and power. 3. The acts and wayes of the Magistrats keeping of the tables of the law, should answer, and be agreable to the nature, extent, and limits of his office & power; within the verge of which, he is to walk, as all others are to do in theirs: As Ministers are to keep both the tables of the law by preaching the word, dispensing of Ordinances, and exercising of discipline, according to the rules of the word; to which they are impowered by the institutions and commands of Christ, without dependance on the Magistrat; so the Magistrat is to keep them likwise, by commanding all to their several duties, protecting them therein by the sword, which is given him for that end; executing of justice in punishing of evil doers, and rewarding the good, &c. but is not to medle with the Government of the Church, in whole or in part; but to see that it be done by these, whom Christ hath called to and intrusted with it.

It is *objected* by others, that it is not the intrinsick visible and internal Government of the Church, that the Magistrat assumes, in the acts of Parliament; it

is only the external Government, that is expreſſly ſo called, in the act of reſtitution? *Anſ.* This is materially Anſwered above; but that we may be diſtinct, there are two things belonging to the Church. (1.) The outward and external adjuncts or accidents; As the *Biotica* or *Mundana*, Stipends, Manſe Glybs, outward liberty and peace, &c. (2.) The proper and true objects of Church Government or power, that are intrinſick to it, although viſible; as the Word, Ordinances, Miniſtery and neceſſary circumſtances &c. It is not the *firſt* of theſe, but the *ſecond* that the act of reſtitution with other acts do truely mean, as is undoubtedly made out by the former arguments; as particularly the firſt three: that it is the Church judicatories; the maters handled in and by them, proper thereto, that conſtituts the King Supream; theſe being eſſential and intrinſick to the Government of the Church, in its ſeveral parts: he that is made ſupream to theſe, is made ſupream to the Church, and all that appertaine to her.

Obj. 2. But it is only the ordering and diſpoſeing of the Government, that is declared to belong to the King. *Anſ.* It is ſo ſaid in that act, but it is evident from the mater and frame of it, that it is the Government in whole that is truely meant and intended, as is formerly proven. But 2. Ordering and diſpoſing of things, proper and ſpecifick to any Government, is a part of the Government it ſelf; and to whom the Government belongs, the ordering of it belongs likwiſe: by the ſame reaſons that any ſhall undertake to prove, that the ordering and diſpoſeing of the civil Government belongs to the Ma-

giſtrat

giſtrat; we ſhall prove the ordering and diſpoſing of the Churches Government does belong to Church Officers: no Government can be perfect without it, or able to attaine its ends, and therefore muſt neceſſarily be implyed in, and intrinſick to it.

Obj. 3. But there are ſome acts of Church power the Magiſtrat may do, as convocating of Synods, determining of circumſtances, indicting of publict faſts and thanksgivings? *Anſ.* As we deny all formal Church power to the Magiſtrat, and all acts formally proceding therefrom; ſo we grant there are acts, *Firſt*, ſome common as prayer, rebuking, inſtructing of others, and others of the like nature: which, when they come from a Church Officer, are *authoritative* and acts of Church power; that are yet performable by others, in their ſtations, and (ſo to ſpeak) are *charitative*. 2. Some are proper and only belongs to Church Officers, as preaching of the Goſpel, diſpenſing of the Sacraments, exerciſe of Church diſcipline, &c. We doe not deny, but chierfully grant (wiſhing with all our hearts, there were many ſuch Magiſtrats in the Church) that the Magiſtrat ought to rebuke, to exhort, admonish, inſtruct & pray, &c. As all others in their ſtations and offices ſhould do; but from thence it will not follow, that he may exerciſe formal acts of Church power, more then others; or that the Church power is dependant on him: the Conſequence is wide. But to the particular inſtances; as, that of convocating of Synods or any Church judicatory, we ſay, it is within the verge of his power, as a Magiſtrat, who may and ought to command all within his dominions, to their ſeveral duties, and Miniſters among others, as they

ought to doe to him, so the Magistrats convocating of Ministers, is but a putting of them to their duty, which in the Magistrat is no act of Church power; but an act of his office he owes to all. 2. This act or deed of the Magistrat, is not privative of the same in the Officers of the Church, who may & ought come together of themselves, as the necessities of the Church requires. On the by, it is an evil consequence; the Magistrat may gather Synods; therefore Ministers may not doe it: It is like to this, others may rebuke, admonish, &c. Therefore Ministers may not doe it. For although the Magistrat have an imperative power, over all; yet it is not privative of any power in others, that is proper to their station and office. (2.) As for the determining of the circumstances in Government, we reply, there are two sorts of circumstances relateing to these, first some extrinsick, and not in themselves simply necessare, although convenient; as Churches of such and such formes, pulpets, ornaments, &c. These, being in their natural use civil, belong to the Magistrat, and are directly under his power, to order and dispose. *Next* 2. There are some circumstances intrinsick to the actions of worship and Government, and so connected therewith, in that degree of necessity, that they cannot be performed without them; and come within the compass of divine commands, on which, the morality of individual actions, as to their goodnes and evil, *pro hic & nunc* does depend; as such and such persons, doctrines, times, places, helps, &c. which all moralists and divines make to specify all humane actions, as to their morality *in individuo*. Of these we assert, that the determination of them,

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as they respect worship and Government, and are connected with them, belongs to the Officers of the Church, and not to the Magistrat: we have given some reasons for this before, as 1. we see commands given to the Church about them, and not to the Magistrat; 1. Cor. 14. 2. If the determination of these were in the Magistrats power, it should be likewise in his power, to hinder, impede and obstruct all right worship and Government, in its exercise, at his pleasure for whoever hath these things in his power, without which, the actions of worship and Government cannot be performed, hath the actions in his power to hinder or not. 3. The consequences of granting this to the Magistrat are mischeivous: for by this, if he do not wholly hinder the exercise of the Ministerial office and power; yet he may restrict and limit it so, as to bring them under dreadful unfaithfulness in their Ministry or office, he may binde them up from preaching such and such doctrines, that, at such and such times and in such cases, God calleth them to preach. As for the (3.) Instance, for indicting of dayes for solemne fasting and humiliation or of thanksgiving; we say, that we reckon it among these common duties of Religion, that every Christian, in his station, is bound by the command of God to observe; and according to the extent of their power to see them observed by others under them, when the dispensations of mercy and judgment cals them to these; as is clear from the precepts and examples we have in the word; so that all Christians, in their several capacities, offices, powers and extent of the same, have the power of indicting and keeping of such times and dayes; as

Masters in families, pastours in congregations, or in their associations, and Magistrats, &c. From this it will not follow, that Magistrats, Masters of Families, &c. their indicting of such dayes for divine exercises, is an act of Church power; although it be such in the Officers of the Church, and as it comes from them: no more then others rebuking, exhorting, &c. is an act of Church authority and power, although it be so from them. 2. That it only belongs to the Magistrat to indict dayes of publict fastings, or of thanksgiving, & not to the pastours of the Church, where hath our antagonists learned this? We grant the Magistrat participats with others in this power; but the nature of these duties, the precepts, and examples of the word, impowers others in their capacities, as much as him: it were easy to make this out. We acknowledge, for the more harmony in this publict work, and convenient following of it, with benefite and advantage to Church and State, it were expedient, that Magistrats and Ministers did previously consult, and agree about publict fasts and thanksgiving: but to affirme this, to the privation of the power and obligations, laid on others anent it; is not only an encroachment on the divine rights of others, but a looseing of these bonds, with which God hath tyed them; and what is this but to fight against God in the persones of his Creaturs.

Obj. 4. Seing Ministers are bound to give an accompt to the Magistrat, when required, of what they do, in the Government of the Church; will it not follow, they are subordinat to him in so far, in its exercise? *Anſ.* No wayes; for (1.) They stand obliged to do the like to all others, over whom they

they are set, and do rule; when their carriage in the Ministry is stumbling and offensive to them; to which they are obliged, both by general and particular precepts; and yet it will not follow, that in their Ministry they are subordinat to such. (2.) The Magistrat, by vertue of his professed subjection to Christ, is bound to give an accompt of his actings in his Government to Ministers and others, when he proveth scandalous and offensive: which many of them have done. To this they are obliedged, both on the accompt of their promised subjection to the word, its ordinances, and Christs servants, dispensing the same; and likewise on the accompt of Charity and love, that binds all, not only to endeavour the preventing, but removing of offences, when given; to which the Magistrat is as incident, in his capacity, as others; as alas sad experience puts beyond debate!

Obj. 5. But as the Government of the Church, and its exercise, is the object of the Magistrats power and its acts; does he not act about those imperially, and *Architectonice?* And if it be so, is he not Supream to & above the Ministers of the Church, and they subordinat to him? *Ans.* This is the objection of the greateft seeming strength; but on a serious consideration of it, its weakness will soon appear. We yeeld, without any advantage to our enemies cause, that what the Magistrat does as such, about Church maters and officers, he does it imperially and with dominion, and (as they use to speak) *Architectonice*: but what then? It proves the persons to be subordinat to the Magistrat in these his acts; but not the power in its exercise; nor the maters about

about which it is exerciſed, for (1.) The Magiſtrat, when he by his irreligious and unjuſt carriage in his office, or otherwayes, becomes notoriouſly ſcandalous to the Church, is lyable to Miniſterial admonitions, rebukes, ſeclusions from the Sacraments, &c. And is thereby ſubordinat to Church power, or the Miniſters of Chriſt in exercing it about him; and yet the Magiſtratical power, and its exerciſe, is not ſubject to them, whatever reſiſtence our oppoſits make to this mutual ſubordination of the perſons of Magiſtrats and Miniſters: yet they muſt either deny the Chriſtian Magiſtrats the benefits of the Goſpel & its ordinances, diſpenſed by Miniſters; or els yeeld this truth. Is it not clear in other powers or relations? as ſuppone, one is both a Magiſtrat and a Son, is there not here a reciprocal ſubordination and ſuperiority of perſons with a coordination of powers, as is hinted above? We plead no more for the Miniſters of the Goſpel, and the Government of the Church commited to them. We grant a great difference in other reſpects, betwixt the Magiſtrat and Miniſters; they act as meer ſervants, without all dominion in them; He with dominion and Magiſtratical authority over the perſons of Miniſters; yet for all this the powers are coordinat, and in their exerciſe not directly ſubject to one another. (2.) Theſe powers, their exerciſe, and reſpective objects becoming reciprocally the object of one another (as the Miniſtry and its objects being one part of the Magiſtrats power, the Magiſtrat and the objects of his power, being likewiſe a part of the object about which Miniſters exerciſe their power) under different formalities and ſpecifications, there ariſes or reſults, not only a

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sweet harmony, and a mutual subserviency to one another, in advancing of their respective ends; but likewise an indirect subordination to one another, in the exercise of their powers, without any dependance of these powers upon one another. But this subordination is only of the persons, and not of the powers: which by being the mutual objects of one anothers powers, does not subject the power, and its exercise, but only the persons; for any thing or power becoming the object of another, does not subordinat it to that power; the Word, Ordinances, &c. are not, by being the object either of the Ministerial or the Magistratical power, subordinated or subject thereto; so that the Ministerial power, its exercise, and the maters about which it converses, are not by being the object of the Magistrats power subordinated to it. This breaks the force of our adversaries Argument, which lyes mainly in this.

Obj. 6. It is only this sort of Supremacy and subordination, that the act of restitution does mean? *Ans.* It is not so, as is clear from the words and frame of the acts; for it is the Church assemblies, their proper maters, their constitution, the intrinsick obligation of their conclusions, that are subordinated to the Magistrat; so that all is nothing without him.

Obj. 7. All Divines, even the Presbyterians and independents in the Church of *England*, grant the Magistrat to be Supream in all causes, and over all persons Ecclesiastical; none of them scruple to take the oath of Supremacy, as it is established by law in that Kingdom? *Ans.* All Divines do not grant this, as is to be seen in the writings of many; and for any

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it is not yeelded by the Presbyteri-
and Independants, in the sense controverted a-
neither can it, seing it quyt overthrows,
all Church Government, in its distinction from and
independency on the civil Government of the Magi-
strat, which is contrare to the known principles both
of Presbyterians and Independants; and if the Pre-
lats themselves durst speak their minde conforme to
their owne principles, they would not in this differ
from us (as *Thorndike* more free and engenuous then
the rest of his party does declame and cry out against
the oath of Supremacy, as the great crying sin of the
Church of *England*,) but to an excesse, would assert
all, and much more, then we do, in this mater,
were it not for fear of offending the Magistrat, on
whom now they wholly depend, and whose Creatu-
rs they only are; which hath in our times recon-
ciled the *Prelatical* and *Erastian* principles, at least
in appearance, that are most contrare to and distant
from one another, yea more then theirs and ours. And
although the Presbyterians and Independants, in the
Church of *England*, do take the oath of Supremacy,
yet it is with such explications, allowed & assented
to by the Magistrat, that give it a sound sense, which
was stumbled and scrupled at both in Queen *Elizabeth*
and King *James* times, till its sense was explicat, and
allowed; as is to be seen in the instructions given to
justices of the peace by Queen *Elizabeth*, for admini-
strating the said oath, & Bishop *Ushers* explanation of
it, approven by King *James*. In which sense it is under-
stood & taken to this day among them. But to under-
stand this mater aright, and to avoid the labyrinth of
generalities & ambiguities, with which, some divines

perple-

perplex & intricat it; it would be consid[illegible] That there is a two fold proper supremacy, [illegible] and another Ecclesiastical, about Church [illegible] meetings and maters. 2. There are two Kinds of Causes, of those they call Ecclesiastical; some that are only extrinsically such, but in their nature, immediat ends and use, civil, that, for their more remote ends and respects to things truely and properly sacred, are called Ecclesiastical, as lawes made for the Church & her concerns, outward liberty and peace, external rewards and punishments, &c. Againe some causes Ecclesiastical are intrinsically and formally such, as who shall preach the Gospel, & be invested with the Ministery, or who shall be deposed from it, who shall be rebuked, admonished and excommunicated; or received and admitted into the Church, &c. 3. The terme *CAUSES* is not here to be understood in a physical, but moral and juridical sense; that is, for questions to be decided by those, who are impowered, either by God or men, to this work. 4. Causes or questions, as they are the object of power & its exercise, are either proper and immediat; or els improper and remote. Hence we say. 1. That the Magistrat is Supream Governour in all things or causes, properly civil, relating to causes and persons Ecclesiastical: the judicial cognition and definitive judgment of these belong to him, and not to the Church: in this sense we admit the oath of Supremacy, & declared ourselves willing to take it, which was refused us. 2. That the Magistrat is not the supreme Governour in Causes, and over persons formally Ecclesiastical: This we assert belongs to Christ Jesus only, and not to the Magistrat, as hath been proven above. This is

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the Supremacy, we deny to the Magistrat, and for which we have declined to take the oath anent it, that is now established law, being perswaded (for the reasons formerly given) that this is the supremacy granted by law, and understood in this oath. But 3. That causes and persons formally Ecclesiastical are not the proper and immediat object of the Magistrats power, but only improper and remote, and the reason is, because in the execution of Christs law given to the Church, the judicial cognition and definitive judgment about these belongs not to the Magistrat, but to the Ministers of the word; as for instance, it is not the Magistrats part to cognosce and determine, who is to be received into the Church, and who not; this is proper to the Ministers of the Gospel: and so of other causes and questions of the like nature. *Obj.* Then the Magistrat, in protecting, countenancing and furthering of the Churches acts and sentences by the sword, must be a blinde executer of them? *Ans.* This must be said out of envy and malice; for (1.) the Church is the executer of her own acts and sentences, and not the Magistrat, who only puts to execution his owne lawes, that he is pleased to enact on her behalf. (2.) It is known to all, that we grant to the Magistrat, (and to all the Church,) a discretive judgment to cognosce of the Churches acts and sentences; and if he find them not to be just, he hath a definitive judgment anent the execution of his own Lawes made about them: for the obligation that arises from Church acts and sentences on all in the Church, to the obeying and furthering of them, is only conditional, and not absolute; that is, none is bound to obey and adv-

the Churches sentences, except their mater be just and righteous, which must be first known before they finde themselves obliged to this. But here the immediat object of the Magistrats power and its exercise, about Church acts and sentences, is properly civil, and not Ecclesiastical, to wit, whether he will execute his owne law or not. These things are easy and plaine, and if ambition and worldly interests had not determined many to the contrare, there would be little controversie about them.

Obj: 8. The Magistrats power and its exercise about Church maters and meetings, being independant on the Church; what he does in relation to Church concerns, determinations and sentences, he may doe it antecedent to these, without the Church. *Anſ.* We deny the consequence to be universally true: for some of the Magistrats sentences about Church maters and meetings doe necessarly suppone, the Churches sentences and acts, for their object; as these of ordination, excommunication: acts of regulation &c. must necessarly pass, before the Magistrat can reach the persons and things, to which they are applyed: for instance, before the Magistrat can doe justice to a Minister in his maintenance, he must first be ordained, & by it have right thereto, on the Churches act of ordination; which must first be known to the Magistrat, and by him given as the ground or reason of his sentence, for the Ministers legal right to enjoy and use the provided and allowed maintenance; and so of many others. We grant, in some cases and things, a power to the Magistrat about Church maters and meetings, which he may exercise, antecedent to the exercise of Church power;

he may, yea, no doubt, he ought to command Ministers, when negligent, to their work or duty, without a Church sentence, yea contrare to it: but to say, that the exercise of his power, in many things and cases, is not necessarly subsequent to the acts and exercise of Church power, is most absurd, & abhorrent to all right reason; seing there are many things that the Magistrat ought to doe to and for the Church, that necessarly suppone, not only the being, but the exercise of Church power, without which the Magistrat cannot doe: how shall he punish contumacious, heretical and excommunicat persones till they be first dealt with by the Church, conforme to the rules of the word, and declared to be such, &c. The reason of the consequence is weak; for all created power suppones its object, and in its exercise must be subsequent and posteriour to it; which is not inconsistent with the independency of any power on another; as is to be seen in the instance of the marital power, and others; the power of the Magistrat about it presupponeth the conjugal relation, & its acts, before it can put the laws in execution anent it, in application to the persones under that relation. The designe of this objection is obvious, which is, to evert all Church Government, the necessity and use of it: but before it have its full intended force, it must first be proven, that Church power and its acts are competent to the Magistrat, and may be done by him; as that he may ordaine, depose, receive into, and cast out of the Church, preach the word, dispense all ordinances, &c. which no *Erastian* hath yet done; for if these be incompetent to the Magistrat, and are to be done by others, the former conclusion will hold. Con-

Conclus. Haveing thus, with all Christian ingenuity and plainnes in the words of truth & sobernes, discovered our hearts anent the foregoeing particulars: we expect that much charity and justice from all, (even our Antagonists) that before they give out their censurs, they will seriously consider, what is said, and in the ballances of Scripture and true reason, impartially ponderat the reasons and grounds of our judgment and practice: least, in stead of fighting against us, they happily be found to fight against God; for seing the grounds, on which we build, are of common obligation on all Christians, and on which, our Christian profession leans; none can refuse our conclusions, but they must either contradict and shake the foundations of the said profession; or els shew their inconsequence, and inconsistancy with these: we have not insisted on, nor much made use of particular places of Scripture, nor wrangled (as many in their debaits doe) about the sense and application of these, nor laid the stress of our arguments from antiquity on citations from particular fathers and historians; but on the series and threed of these ancient records; to which we appeal, anent the maters debated in the preceeding discourse: as any, that deals candidly and impartially, will, on trial, find. The issue of our adversaries arguments, in the defence of the *Antitheses*, resolving in these three, the imperfection of the Scriptures; the manifest and violent perverting and wresting of them; the professed and open contradicting of their authority, by *Hobs Leviathan*, and others more gross, (if grosser can be) do sufficiently declare, what the tendency of the contrare opinion is, and what we may

aspect, will be the result of the same, if things continue, for some time, in their present channel. All Protestants, before these debats entered on the field, esteemed the perfection of the Scriptures, the chief and principal foundation of the reformed protestant Religion; and builded thereon their doctrins, in opposition to popery: which, the patrones of prelacy doe now strick at, and labour to shake, in denying their sufficiency or perfection, in maters of obedience or practice; whereby they break the force of all the arguments, that the Protestants used against the Papists, for the fulness and perfection of the holy Scriptures: and the truth is, prelacy cannot be maintained without this assertion; as is to be seen in the most eminent assertors of it: for if we hold the Scriptures to be a perfect and full rule of faith and manners, and not to be receded from, in maters of doctrine, worship and Government; the prelacy controverted, having so little evidence from them, it cannot stand, and if this sufficient regulation of the Scripturs be refused, what a wide door is opened to humane inventions; and what may not men bring in at it, to the corrupting and polluting of all the Churches concerns? We grant, the admitting of the Scriptures, for a pairt of the Churches Canon and rule, seems to draw a barr on much of the Romish trash, (which is condemned thereby;) but doe not the prelates boldness, in violenting and forceing of them, in answering of our arguments, and maintaining of their concepts, remove this barr, and lay the door open, for what they will? for howbeit the Scripture speaks, against the worshiping of Creatures, Images, Angels and Men, and chargeth these pe-

&c.

ſtiſes with idolatry: yet *Thorndike*, and moſt of the now prelatical gang, purge the popish maſſe, the worshiping of the hoſt, of the virgine Mary, Images & Saints, from idolatry and superſtition. How impudently bold are the *Eraſtians*, in wreſting the Scriptures, uſed by their antagoniſts; in which they are not inferior to the *Socinians*, and the moſt noted hereticks of the Church; but we muſt ſay, with leſſe shew of reaſon; as will be evident to any, that will compare them together in their comments. What ſecurity can the Church promiſe her ſelf from theſe mens principles and wayes, who build their concluſions, on ſuch foundations, which if once admitted overturns all? But alas! when to enlarge the Magiſtrats power, and to give ſupport to their wild aſſertions about it, the divine authority and doctrins of the Holy Scriptures are boldly contradicted; and all Religion ultimatly reſolved into the Magiſtrats Conſcience and Lawes; as *Hobs Leviathan*, *Parker* & others, undertake to make out, againſt the foundations & ſuperſtructurs of our Religion, are they not thus pulled done to uphold the Magiſtrat, & to extend an immenſe power in him? but, we hope, to the external shame, confuſion and ruine of the cauſe for which they contend. How much doe we finde that saying of *Pauls* 2. *Timoth* 3. 13. verified in theſe men, *evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived*: but our confidence is, that their *folly being made maneſeſt to all men, they ſhall proceed no further*: for the cauſe which they oppoſe is Gods, and that which he muſt owne and plead; ſeing the Royal prerogative of his abſolute Soveraignity and Supremacy, are intrinched upon,

by his Creatures, the wormes of the earth; contrare to their indebted and professed subto him, assaile his throan, and invade the of his high and glorious Crowne, which he shold. OH that all, ingadged in this warr the Lord and his anointed, would read and consider the *Second Psalme*, and yet hearken to what foretold anent the issue of it, which will be heavy to them, that obstinatly set themselves in opposition to Christ and his Kingdome. Let none, that side with Christ in this quarrel, be affrayed or ashamed, to appear in its defence against all sorts of opponents; for as we have the full light and evidence of the Word of God, to justify its righteousnes, from the reproaches of men: So we have the righteous and Almighty God to take our part, who, on the account of his justice and Supream dominion, is ingadged to owne them, that owne him in this caule. In contending for these, we contend not for honours, dignities and the riches of this world; but only for the Lawes, Ordinances, and Servants of Christ Jesus; and that obedience and subjection to him in them, that he requires of all in his word; yea for the Royal dignities, & supereminent prerogatives of his righteous and glorious Crowne, which the Father hath placed on his head; giving him a name above all names, that, in the name of this JESUS, all knees should bow, yea shall bow. Who needs to be affrayed, who owne such a King, and have him on their side, who in his own persone overcame & Triumphed over all his enemies; & yet againe will doe so, in the persones of his weak, contemned and persecuted servants & people. The Lord build up the walls of Jerusalem, & make her a peacable habitation. Amen.